DOG DAYS

STEWART EDWARD WHITE

Tory and Noël

from

Joey.

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Dog Days

OTHER TIMES, OTHER DOGS

BOOKS BY

STEWART EDWARD WHITE

FICTION

THE GLORY HOLE

Of the Far West: THE CLAIM JUMPERS
BLAZED TRAIL STORIES—THE WESTERNERS—THE KILLER
ARIZONA NIGHTS

Of the Far North: CONJUROR'S HOUSE—THE SILENT
PLACES—SKOOKUM CHUCK—SECRET HARBOUR

Of the Lumber Woods: THE BLAZED TRAIL
THE RIVERMAN—BLAZED TRAIL STORIES
THE RULES OF THE GAME

Of California: THE RULES OF THE GAME—THE GRAY
DAWN—GOLD—THE ROSE DAWN—ON TIPTOE

Of Mystery: THE MYSTERY (With Samuel Hopkins Adams)
THE SIGN AT SIX

Of Africa: THE LEOPARD WOMAN—SIMBA—BACK OF BEYOND

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AFRICAN CAMPFIRES—THE PASS—THE REDISCOVERED
COUNTRY—LIONS IN THE PATH

HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL

THE 'FORTY-NINERS
DANIEL BOONE: WILDERNESS SCOUT
CREDO—WHY BE A MUD TURTLE?
DOG DAYS

JUVENILE

THE MAGIC FOREST
THE ADVENTURES OF BOBBY ORDE

Stepping "not too harshly on his hind paws."

Dog Days

OTHER TIMES, OTHER DOGS

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A MAN
AND HIS DOG FRIENDS THROUGH FOUR
DECADES OF CHANGING AMERICA

By
Stewart Edward White

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
WILL CRAWFORD

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I. The Dog Emeritus

It is very easy to keep a dog. This statement may be doubted by those who have read technical kennel books or training books; or, perhaps, have made one or two experiments toward "getting a puppy for the children." The former will be appalled at the complications advised as necessary; the latter will remember only too vividly how that dratted obstinate puppy's wails shattered the stilly night; how his huge paws tore up precious bulbs; how his new teeth marked the furniture; and how little improvement followed

even repeated punishment. Nevertheless, I repeat: it is very easy to keep a dog. Furthermore, you need to know and to keep in mind only one thing.

That one thing is this: your dog wants to do what you wish him to do.

This may seem like a debatable statement; but it is true. No other living creature so desires to live according to not his own but another's ideas. No other living creature so cheerfully and so whole-heartedly modifies his whole natural scheme of existence to adopt one that is often almost wholly artificial to him. No other living creature watches so eagerly another's actions in the hope of a hint by means of which he can conform. A dog is able at a pinch to live the most undoggy life in the most unfit environment, sustained only by this deep-seated instinct of adaptability in the worship of his chosen god. He alone of all the animal kingdom sacrifices not only his age-old habits and instincts but his own kind, and at need even his life, to the ideal of his steadfast choice. Somehow, deep in his racial consciousness, that choice, that affinity, is implanted, part of the very fiber of his being. Why this touching loyalty

we cannot even guess. No other animal exhibits it, even to its own kind. Among human beings it is rare. No trencher service this, as is the case with other beasts attached to man; for your dog will leave the trencher to follow you on your way. He will choose unhesitatingly hunger, cold, hard lying in preference to ease and softness of life when the one is the allotment of his master and the other is to be gained only by the price of desertion.

Strong statements? Too strong? Perhaps: if one narrows their application to deplorable specific cases which a still progressing spiritual evolution supplies abundantly in all aspects of life for the comfort of the misanthropic. I have read some devastating indictments of the dog as a domestic animal, written by those peculiar people who can think only in terms of detail. Perhaps they are temperamentally unable to look up in envisionment of the larger things. Certainly if they were capable of so doing it would be impossible for them to remain blind to certain indubitable general facts. What mysterious urge of affinity has impelled the dog so strikingly to cut away from the immemorial tradition of the

animal kingdom in order to throw in his lot with man? That the choice is instinctive, racial, may be very well observed in very young puppies, at the roly-poly stage, the uncertain blue of blindness not yet cleared from their eyes, too young to know even the simplest of the world's relationships. In their play they tumble within the dignity of the Dog Emeritus and are properly growled at. They flee with whimpers of terror to the protection of—whom? Their mother? Nine times in ten to the nearest human! Why? Perhaps along that path lies the genius of their race. Perhaps in the long sight of destiny the dog is fated to stand as the essential link in understanding between man, the solitary animal, and all the myriads of other related creatures through whose multitude life also manifests. Be that as it may, the choice has been made; and as its consequence already the dog has risen to the point where as a race he stands strongly and simply for two spiritual qualities. More purely than man himself, he carries loyalty and fidelity to an intensity capable at times of submerging even such fundamental instincts as that of self-preservation. And in return he asks nothing save the bare op-

portunity to share in his own way the groping fortunes of his chosen partner in eternity.

2

So I repeat, with even more confidence: the thing to remember in keeping a dog, and in the modification of his conduct called training, is that as a fundamental principle of his very position in cosmos he wants to do what you desire. When his actions run, as it seems to you perversely, counter to your ideas of desirable conduct, the chances are many, many to one that it is merely because you have not made him understand. That is almost your whole job in your task of fitting his behavior to your ideas; to make him understand.

It is rather a bewildering world to the honest-intentioned dog, you must admit. There are so many thoroughly satisfactory things to do, natural things, things that racial experience has tested out and endorsed and passed on as practical instincts, which, however, prove on trial unwelcome to the gods. And there is nothing to go by, no invariability that in time might establish counter instincts, so to speak. There is no

sufficient uniformity in the wishes of the gods. One objects to barking; another seems to encourage it. This one cheers on the joyous chasing of cats; that one visits with wrath the mildest anti-feline bristling. With the exception of a very few fundamentals there are no Universal Rules for the Conduct of Dogs. It is all empirical. One must find out; and the finding out is anxious and very, very puzzling. All other animals follow their instincts unchecked. Only the dog must, by observation and intelligence and that connecting of cause and effect which we call reasoning, modify his instincts and his conduct to accord with the personal ideas of his humans.

Let us leave aside for the moment any consideration of the technical training of specialists to do specific things—hunting dogs and sheep dogs, for instance. Let us consider only a few of those simple necessary points of contact which will establish satisfactorily our relationships, so that the dog lives with us and not we with the dog. That is a very important distinction, and it is rarely drawn clearly enough. The dog means well, or at least he means no harm; and too often we are soft hearted enough to sense that, and not

clear headed enough to think through to the essential, which is that he will be every bit as enthusiastically happy behaving as we wish just as soon as he finds out how that is. He loves his humans with an overflowing adoration. How natural that he should desire mightily to express the fact; and, as we will not always stoop to him, that he should strive as best he may to rise to us. We are touched and pleased and flattered—when we have on our old clothes. How should he know old clothes from new, or comprehend the iniquity of muddy paws? That is a distinction beyond him. But he is quite capable of understanding that jumping up is never, in any circumstances, popular. If we would demand that he adapt his ways to ours, he has a right to demand consistency from us. Nor, if we take the trouble to consider the situation, do we thoughtlessly repulse his whole uprush of affection by hitting him over the head. That is effective, but excessive, like burning down the house to get rid of the rats. His translation may not be to our liking. It would be quite logical for him to assume that his affection, and not merely his paws on your chest, is repugnant to you. You may teach him to

cringe rather than merely to forbear. It is better to hold both his forepaws in your hands, at the same time stepping not too harshly on his hind paws. Then, dropping him to all fours, spare a moment to pat and make much of him at his own level so that he may know that all is well between you.

There is no intention of writing a treatise on the training of dogs. Nor is there any desire to intimate that punishment is at all times superfluous. But I would like to emphasize the thought that the main thing is to convey to his intelligence your idea in such form that he can grasp it, and to repeat that once he has grasped it his strong racial instinct is to conform. Punishment is useful and should be inflicted, only with that end clearly in view. It should be of the sort and of the degree to convey to him unmistakably that this act, and this act only, is unpopular. Sometimes it may require considerable ingenuity so to focus the punishment on the point desired that its reference may be exact. It is so easy merely to whip the dog and let it go at that! Only rarely does a real dog friend require chastisement merely because he is a "naughty dog." Sometimes

he is wilfully naughty; granted. Sometimes temptation overpowers him. Canine angels on this mundane sphere are no more numerous than human angels. Those are ecstatic occasions, in the full of the moon, and the hushed stillness of summer nights, and the echoes a-tiptoe to be called, when resistance sweeps away before the uprush of an immemorial atavism. Even the dog who knows loses his sense of unity with the trend of human preferences in the surge of instincts old as the world.

Then, since he does know, he must be reminded. Since, whatever the extenuation, he has deliberately acted against his knowledge, he must be treated as a "naughty dog" and told that he is one. His shame-faced, tail-clamped, but unresentful retirement to the silence of his kennel is sufficient earnest of his repentance.

Nor furthermore do I believe so besottedly in super-nobility as not to realize that dog nature is at least as frail as human nature in its susceptibility to an ordinary fall from grace. Our family does not hold at all with dogs on the furniture. The pet dog always in the best chair is not to us an engaging spectacle. Hairs, mud, and

possible fleas are no addition to human comfort. But it is only just to realize that upholstery in contrast to the hard floor is hardly a fair temptation—like leaving large sums of money lying within reach of poverty. So each dog in our family is supplied with a commodious square cushion in compensation. On it he snoozes all evening quite happily before the open fire.

Now it happens often that we go out to a party of some kind; nevertheless, the dogs are allowed their evening as usual. We have frequently returned at a late hour to find each dog sound asleep, so sound asleep that he did not hear us come in, nor was even aware that we had turned on the electric light and were looking down at him amusedly.

"These," Billy would remark to me, "are the same bold defenders who when we are home call our attention to the fact that a passer-by has even looked at the house!"

Even the sound of her voice did not rouse them. For they were *asleep*, each virtuously on his cushion where he belonged, and he wanted no mistake to be made as to that.

Only—when we entered the room a rocking chair was still swaying back and forth!

Here was deliberate disobedience, and also that deceit which bespoke the guilty conscience. Nor were the cushions on the chair any softer than those on the floor, and nowhere near as luxuriously commodious. The situation was not difficult for such gods as ourselves to read! The proper procedure here was not whipping. Whipping would be effective but unnecessary. All that was required was to point out to each guilty party the illegal spot he late had occupied and to make the jeering remark appropriate to the occasion. The surprise and chagrin over being found out so readily after such deep scheming and such perfectly executed strategy was quite enough punishment. For dogs hate to be laughed at and are very susceptible to ridicule.

I was once jogging slowly along a country road when myself and horse were charged—there is no other word for it—by one of those large, meaty, smooth-coated farm dogs of no breed but exaggerated ideas of property. Accustomed to driving stock, these dogs can be very annoying

and sometimes dangerous at the heels of the lone horseman. This one came bounding down the garden path, full voiced, intent only on his quarry. Arriving at the gate he leaped atop it, intending, as is the custom of dogs crossing such barriers, to poise atop it for an instant before spurning it in his leap down the other side. The gate was on the latch. It swung under the impact, dumping the dog on an ignominious back.

I laughed. The dog took one look at me, clamped his tail, and slunk back to his house. He was not hurt; he was not frightened; he was ashamed.

And while in the mood for disclaimers I had better add that I am not so fatuous as to apply my major premise unreservedly to each and every individual case. I am talking of racial characteristics; averages; general principles. Some dogs hold their own ideas on life. They do not carry their convictions to the point of breaking with humanity; they conform but they withhold their approval. This is especially true of the Scottish terrier. He is a grand little dog, and as companionable and as faithful as they make them; but he has his opinions which he never

relinquishes, whatever his outer concessions of obedience. And in time he probably gets his way about whatever it is, provided the matter does not touch on a fundamental of relationship. The power of his dour, steady, silent disapproval wears down resistance. Talk of the power of thought! A friend of ours has kept Scotties for years. She struggled at first for complete mental dominance, but finally gave it up. She is a Roman Catholic; and she maintains that when each evening these small black Presbyterian bodies fix her with their unwavering shoe-button eyes, she can fairly hear them saying: "You Papist, you!" And maintain herself as stoutly as she may, she cannot prevent herself from feeling abashed.

Also I know a devil-may-care, solidly built larrikin of a dog named Terry, a bulldoggish person, who swashbuckles about the community with his hat on one side, so to speak, viewing life through a humorous and sardonic eye. He is in no sense an outlaw; he leads in essentials a decent doggy life. He does not bark aimlessly at night to the impairment of sleep; he accompanies and keeps a generally supervisory eye on the

children; he exhibits a proper amount of responsibility for his premises, where he may often be discovered by the evening caller conventionally asleep on the doorstep. But otherwise he reserves the right to live as he pleases. He feels no small obligation to be friendly with the neighbor's dog merely because that canine is accompanied by the neighbor. Indeed, he rarely acknowledges the neighbor's attempt at a friendly "Hullo, Terry!" by even a conventional polite lowering of the ears, let alone a wag of the tail, but surveys such advances cool eyed. No unfriendly demonstrations, you understand: merely a contemptuous tolerance. With an equal impersonality he allows himself whatever leaves of absence present themselves to him as desirable, when he may be encountered at distant places strolling, exclusive and unconcerned, aloof from even his own kind, surveying the world from the altitude of his own secret and detached amusement. Nevertheless, in time, he always returns to resume his obligations as he sees them. Altogether a person of original and independent views is Terry; and I admire his competent placing of himself and the fidelity

with which he adheres to his own conceptions of life.

I have not been able to converse with him on the subject, of course; but I conceive his attitude to be an admirable and original facing of conditions. For Terry is not allowed in the house.

If a dog is not allowed in the house, he is thereby shut off from the full perfection of that opportunity of human companionship for the sake of which he has renounced the closeness of his kinship with other animals. For it is an indubitable fact, provable to the most casual observation, that in his association with man the dog is capable of developing a personal individuality astoundingly like that of man himself. And the more intimate the association, the greater the development. A dog who is his master's constant companion in all his goings and comings and doings, who travels with him wherever he goes, and shares all his activities as far as he may, becomes in time uncannily human. In the depths of his clear gaze one may almost glimpse a soul; puzzled a little, baffled and hampered, perhaps, but self-aware. We none of us know where we are going nor to what broader ends our

development is to lead. All we know is that the development is actual and that it seems, by and large, to have a constant direction. We are on our way. Similarly, the purport of this extraordinary and deliberate stepping aside from the perfect balances and adjustments of animal life in favor of the groping and often painful adjustments of life with as alien a creature as man cannot but have its deeper significances. Not too fancifully, it might well be that among all animals it is the dog's high fate and privilege to develop that individual and single personality which is at least the inception or germ of the continuing life. Certainly in his own short span of years he is capable of rising from being merely a dog, made up of fundamental characteristics common to the whole canine race, to the dignity of a distinct and individual personality. That this astonishingly rapid evolution is due to his chosen companionship with man is evident when we consider wild dogs, or pariah dogs, or the standardized dogs of large and impersonal kennels, who remain all their lives just dogs. Outside the pleasure we should get from the company of so loving a friend, we must feel that we

owe him every opportunity that companionship can afford. For if in our choice is the bestowing or the withholding of personality, then we cannot avoid a sense both of responsibility and of privilege. It is almost as though the scheme of things had at this point indulged us in one of the godlike powers. Into our prentice hands is given soul stuff to fashion or to refuse.

This is very fanciful and imaginative, I agree. But it must be remembered that imagination is one of the finest fashioning tools we can employ in the shaping of our own spiritual destinies; and it suffices if by its means we settle our feet a little more firmly on solid earth. And really, unless you do let your dog in the house, you are, for the sake of a shallow housewifely idea, passing up goodly opportunities both for him and for yourself.

Do not be alarmed for the house. He is not going to harm it in any way as soon as you make him understand his limits and his privileges therein. The dog is a most adaptable creature; almost equal in that respect to man himself. Wherever his master's destinies lead he can go too; and he can arrange his life to suit conditions.

A friend of mine named Lua, or Leeward, has lived practically all his life from puppyhood aboard a fifty-foot gas cruiser. He lacks opportunities for almost every normal dog activity, but he has adjusted himself so perfectly to circumstances that he has developed a fascinating career of his own that fits them accurately. Deprived of cats, he accepts crabs; of roaming space, he substitutes philosophic but alert contemplation; and in lieu of the customary exercise of walks and runs he brings forth from the surface of the sea, not the conventional stick, but veritable small trees such as his master can only with difficulty cast forth for his retrieving; swimming around and around them until he can get a jaw hold, towing them wry necked in circles until, snorting and blowing, he manages by the steering aid of a frantic tail to head them toward the shore. And when the beach is gained he does not give over until, bracing and tugging and panting, he has edged them inch by inch completely out of the water onto the land. Then he shakes himself and lies down alongside his trophy and smiles expansively. Lua has certainly accomplished his daily dozen.

His ingenuity in the search for substitutes was checked for a time by one lack. There was no place aboard to bury bones. This was serious, for as everybody knows it is mandatory to bury bones. It does not matter that one is in touch with a trustworthy food supply and has found by experience that there is no necessity whatever of laying up provision for possible dearth. That has no bearing on the situation. There are certain conventions which have nothing to do with necessity but which are sacred obligations integral to one's place in cosmos. If one is a dog, one buries bones; and that is all there is to it. Lua was obviously much disturbed. He carried his spare bones about, and laid them down, and contemplated them worriedly. Finally the solution was found. Now Lua lifts with his nose two or three loops of rope, inserts the bone beneath them, and with his paws rearranges the coil. The bone is officially buried; and Lua's age-old racial instincts are satisfied.

So admirable and complete are his substitutions that ashore he is as completely naïve as any old salt. What his attitude toward other dogs should be perplexes him; cats are of aca-

demic interest only; his instincts of self-preservation anent traffic are rudimentary. He is a typical Jack-ashore. But once aboard the lugger he is all dog and very much of a person.

3

This facility of adaptation accounts for many things. We see the dog in the most incongruous circumstances entering with zest into both his master's play and his work. He drags sledges in the Far North or carts in Flanders; he hunts man's quarry for him after a great variety of conventions, to all of which he adheres rigidly; he may be seen tagging the mounted man's horse, bowling gayly over the hills in advance of the pedestrian, soberly and vigilantly accompanying the baby carriage, thrusting overside the motor car an eager nose into the streaming wind. Now that man has taken to the air he too has become air minded and begs to go along. There are few human ways of life that the dog is not capable of entering; and as a participant. I know a British Columbia dog who goes salmon fishing with his master, who is a professional fisherman. He is of the greatest assistance in

making a landing. As soon as the boat is near enough he leaps to the float carrying the end of the mooring line, and then he braces back on all four feet and hangs on and tugs and utters such small half-strangled woofs as his mouthful of rope will permit. And when everything is fast he looks from one to the other of the bystanders, his eyes sparkling with pride and self-importance. There is nothing a dog likes better than some kind of a job connected with the family activities. If given no real job, he is apt to invent one, even if it is only that of keeping the garden wall free of lizards. A short distance below me lives a family with a baby and a nondescript small black and white dog. The baby takes a daily airing in a carriage pushed along the paved country road. There are no sidewalks, but the road is wide and cars are few, and there is plenty of room to pass. The nurse takes things placidly enough. Not so the dog. On the approach of a car he advances well into the center, where he plants his uncompromising small form. Often I have been forced almost off the pavement to avoid him, but he refuses to give way one inch. As the car passes he follows it watchfully until it is well by, then

resumes his anxious place. His real heroism in the fulfillment of this self-imposed duty becomes apparent when the motorist happens upon him alone. Then he takes to the fields with precipitation. He is afraid of motor cars. And is the essence of conscientiousness ever better expressed than by a dog carrying a package for his master?

So deep rooted is this desire for adaptability that one might almost ascribe to it, in the Dog Quality of life, its willingness to produce from itself so wide a variety for man's use and pleasure. In the long course of evolution what an astounding canine multiformity! Every whim or need seems to have been answered. Sled dogs, bird dogs, war dogs, police dogs, herding dogs, dogs of mere caprice, even down to those insectoid toys esteemed only by their owners. To be sure, it might be argued that man has himself produced this astounding diversity by his skill in selective breeding; and that is true. But his material must have had in its fiber some mystic willingness. Breed as he might, I doubt if he would be able to evolve for himself any such variety of—say—elephants, though the ele-

phant is an intelligent beast and quite willing to work for a master.

4

But this flexible adaptability is more subtly to be observed in the psychological field and in the short experience of one's own life. One shifts his occupations, changes his modes of existence. He finds that his accompanying dogs, no matter what their breed, will develop a psychology to correspond.

Allow me to illustrate.

It seems to me, when in a self-congratulatory mood, that my span of life has been laid in about as interesting a period of the world's progress as I could have chosen. I can remember the first telephones, the first incandescent lights. I was part of the horse transport age before its integrity had been weakened by even a thought of the "horseless carriage." I was one of those hopeful pioneers who experimented with two cylinders and eight horsepower over the wheel-track roads of California. I have seen horses practically superseded as a means of transportation. I have seen the beginnings of so many things, all of

which have profoundly affected the kind of life we live. The West was new when I was young. There were then no thoughts of, no need for, bag limits, or propagation of game, or game refuges, or private preserves, or posted lands. There were few trails in the mountains save the ways through used by the cattle and sheep men. And, later, when the automobile had proved itself, for a time there were only the old horse roads; and one made a hundred and fifty miles a day thankfully, and learned how to drive as accurately backward as ahead, and camped where night found one by streamside, and no fences, no "auto camps," not even designated camping places. Then motor camping was actually camping and was fun. But with improving roads and cars, and the resultant increasing accessibility, it lost much of its charm—at least to one who had known the old thing. One can make no worse mistake than to try to cling to an experience after its occasion has passed. Better far to lay it away as a bright memory unsmirched by futile attempts at revival.

This is no lament for the good old days. The new days are good too; but they are different.

I am glad it is so; and I am glad, as I before stated, that I have been privileged to live in a time when the changes have been realized so radically, so mightily, and so quickly.

In all this I do not remember being without a dog; and have always admitted him—or them—to full and continuous companionship except for certain short periods when city dwelling or some other circumstances made it impossible. The individuals have been too numerous even to catalogue. As for breeds, I have had Irish setters, Llewellyn setters, Airedales, Irish terriers, Scotties, West Highlands, and not a few whose memory I shall not embarrass by being too definite. Among them were a few mediocrities, but more fine and original characters. They varied as to what might be called their developed talents largely by the epoch in which they had lived. And, as would be expected, each of these epochs produced one super-dog, which represented it, by whose character could be read the influences that had made him; in whose activities were reflected the spirit of his time; and through whose simple annals one may discern, perhaps in some ways more clearly than in

conventional history, certain aspects of the age. Therefore it has occurred to me that it might be interesting to write the biographies of those dogs most definitely responding to the period in which they lived—the Dog Emeritus, as someone has said, of the Hunting Age, and the Horseback Age, and the Motor Age. In the so doing, it is my hope that I shall be able not only to make you acquainted with some very interesting and delightful characters, well worth while in themselves; but also through them to catch something of the activities and the atmosphere and the spirit of vanished days.

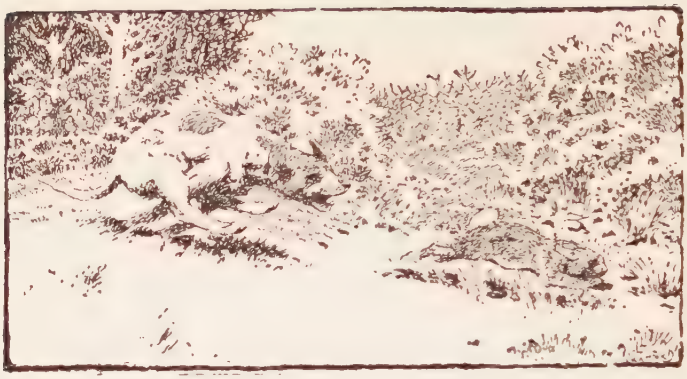
There was Deuce, the Llewellyn setter, unrivaled hunter, expert canoeman, great traveler of the northwoods wilderness, and withal the polished gentleman.

Tuxana: half bull terrier, half pit bull; competent, wise, resourceful; talented in all practical things; a vigorous teacher of the young; a Westerner of the old type with an astounding mileage record of travel afoot in beach, plain, foothill, coast ranges, cattle country, and the remote fastnesses of the High Sierras; the possessor of a knack of instant popularity, and yet with just a

touch of that engaging vulgarity that bespeaks the great commoner.

Irish: another of the same combination of breeds, though no blood kin; also with the priceless gift of ingratiation and fundamental wisdom; definitely Tuxana's spiritual successor, but in so different an actional environment as to develop quite different aptitudes, talents, enthusiasms, and aversions.

These three stand out as commandingly worthy of record. And back of them, as sort of pre-period dog, is the figure of Old Joe, the wise pointer, who took me in charge and brought me up as a human puppy.



II. Old Joe

In the Michigan of the late 'eighties and the 'nineties the ruffed grouse was the noblest game bird that ever flew. His usual habitat during the shooting season was in the blackthorn thickets either surrounding swamps or ponds or along the water courses. Occasionally he was to be found in the "popples" or alders, more rarely in open woods, and rarest of all on the sumach side hills of the old burnings. Whenever we encountered them in the latter situation we marked the day in red as an especial favor of the gods.

Ordinarily we were accustomed to splash in water pools, bending and wriggling our way through the density of interlaced thicket, clambering over old logs and windfalls, stooping low, crossing obstructions as far as we might with the left foot forward so as not to lose our shooting stance, our guns always at the ready. For when the "pat," as he was always known in affectionate diminution of the local "partridge," flushed, he did so under full pressure from the very start. A shattering and disconcerting roar of wings; a brief flash of a glimpse as he flung himself with uncanny accuracy through the intricacies of his cover—he was gone. One must shoot instantly if one was to get his gun off at all, no matter what his stance, what his impossible posture. The split-second pause necessary for the smallest adjustment was too long. One hurled by instinct, as it were, the charge of shot; as though it had been impelled by the dynamics of the bird's flight. It was true snap-shooting. One was wholly unconscious of the gun in the sense of taking aim with it. One's whole being leaped like a flame released, and somehow down the path of that intensely focused concentration sped the charge of shot.

Very few people hunted "pats" for sport. They took theirs in quail and woodcock, snipe and ducks. Occasionally, of course, in pursuit of other game they picked up a "pat" or so. But as a sole object of pursuit the "pat" involved too much hard work, too much bird knowledge, and much too specialized shooting. "Pats" were not for the deliberate marksman who ever saw the rib of his gun. I would not have to go far beyond the fingers of one hand to count the habitual partridge hunters in the comparatively large city in which I then dwelt. And, also, one of these we had discovered had subsidized a farmer to pot-shoot during the week the most of the birds he proudly exhibited on his return of a Sunday night. It was a specialist's game. One had to know where to look for birds; one had, as I have indicated, to shoot instinctively from any position, no matter how awkward, and one had to possess a dog of quite especial natural aptitudes, trained in quite an especial way. Above all, one had to be physically fit and willing to walk steadily from the first to the last daylight, through the hardest kind of cover, weighed down with rubber boots, seventy-five shells, the gun, of

course, the canvas coat, and—one always hoped —as the day wore on, a dragging weight of game; not to speak of the rabbit that was to coax Rufus to clean our guns.

We accepted all this as a matter of course; with zest. We looked with a faint wonder on people who actually preferred the quail's open stubble. Never did we a second time invite anyone not overjoyed to get up two hours before daylight; or who wanted to stop more than five minutes to eat his sandwiches; or who had had enough before it was too dark to shoot; or, indeed, who showed a tendency toward the close of the afternoon to skirt the easy edges instead of plunging into the tangled heart of a "birdy-looking" swamp. We simply could not get their point of view. I might add, from the vantage point of forty-odd years later, that we had very few candidates for a second invitation. Those who had once accompanied us through the whole of one of our fanatical expeditions were generally quite willing to call one day a sufficiency.

Of this we were blandly unconscious. It never occurred to us that we were performing any prodigies of stamina. Now that I am an entirely

different person I can look back upon those two boys with a detached and respectful admiration for the persistence of their sheer physical endurance. Tired by night, certainly; but endowed with the resilience of youth that started us out next morning fresh for a new day.

As I look back on it I can realize too that Ralph and I were singularly well endowed to be expert at this sort of thing. We were husky boys, able for the hard work. We both became lightning quick and accurate at this instinctive type of snap-shooting. We possessed an inexhaustible enthusiasm, and a profound and youthful belief that "pat" shooting was the one occupation in life most worth while. These things were part of ourselves, innate or self-evolved.

But also we had "bird sense." Michigan of that period was a semi-wilderness, half emerged from the old days of the primeval forests. The pine had been lumbered, and from the slashings here and there the stumps had been pulled and rolled aside to free the fields of the infrequent farms. Often their gnarled and snaggy upflung contorted roots marked the boundaries in lieu of fences, affording convenient dodging and lurk-

ing places for squirrels and woodchuck and quail, and even on especial occasions for a "pat" astray from his habitual cover. The hardwoods remained, clothing the hills and hollows in patches of green or brilliant color or the pastel shades of bared limbs. The bottom lands, too, were as yet untouched, and in them wound and sprawled the thicket swamps.

Doggedly and steadily as one might persist, he could in a day tramp over but a limited number of miles of such country. If he were to attempt to cover it completely and systematically he could not accomplish much beyond a unit or so of forest or swamp; and save by good fortune he would be very unlikely to run across more than a chance half-dozen birds, for the average population per square mile was thin. In a big stretch of hardwood forest might be perhaps one strip, one finger reaching out, where the "pats" could be found. Of a half-dozen pieces of cover, superficially almost exactly alike, five would be blank. The expert hunter of partridge walked his bee line from one to the other of these favorable bits, ignoring all the rest. The novice tramped many weary and unprolific miles.

That is what I mean by "bird sense." I suppose it might be an exact and considered science built upon intimate knowledge. The birds were in this place rather than that for some very good reason having to do with food or shelter or safety or comfort. But we had very little of such a rationalization. I doubt if either of us could offhand have told with confidence why we expected to find game in one place rather than another apparently just like it. Probably if we had been asked such a question we could after consideration have given a reply; and the reply might have contained part of the real answer; but it would have been dug up from the depths of our subconsciousness and for the first time coined into definite thought. We had never thought of it before. We sensed the spot as "birdy," so we went there. It was a feeling, a definite instinct.

But as I analyze it now there was nothing occult or mysterious or mystic in our possession of such an instinct. It had been evolved in us in precisely the same way that instincts are evolved in a race or species, by experience and by observation. That the experience and the observation were almost wholly subconscious did not matter.

We knew good bird country because over and over and over again we had found birds in just such places at such a season or time of day. We differentiated these places from others almost exactly similar because, unknown to our thinking minds, the small differences had impressed themselves on our unconscious observation. The two concepts had become linked in affinity. The process was perfectly logical and orderly, but our rather helter-skelter youthful intellects had not much to do with it. As far as we knew we were led to our quarry's cover as though guided by a magnetic current. Some places "felt birdy"; others did not. That was as far as we would have bothered to go into the matter if we had considered it at all.

The acquisition unaided of such instinctive reflexes would be a long and tedious, perhaps an impossible job. Trial-and-error is all very well; but here was too much opportunity for error. It is a shorter matter to learn to recognize what is selected for one's contemplation than to learn through an interminable process of examining and discarding from the whole field. In other words, it is an advantage to be taught. We were

taught by the simple and effective process of demonstration. We were led to birds over and over again. The subconscious knowledge became so ingrained in us that it became at last a true instinct. Our teacher was Old Joe.

2

Old Joe was a very solemn, very kindly, very dignified, and very reserved pointer. He was a solidly built dog, with brown markings, and was the Dog Emeritus of Ralph's family. There were other bird dogs also, for Ralph's father was a hunter, but we rarely had anything to do with them. When we were considered old enough to turn loose in the field on our own—which was somewhere about our twelfth year—Joe was assigned to us. The theory was that Joe was so settled in life and in bird wisdom that our amateurish handling could do him no harm.

The hypothesis was accurate. He knew, and we very shortly came to know, that the assumption that we took him hunting was a joke. In the face of the world he was quite willing to endorse that fiction. He followed us in a grave appearance of subservience as we trudged down the street

to the station. People used sometimes to stop short and grin at us. We wondered why; but as I look back through the years I myself indulge in a reminiscent grin at the spectacle of two very earnest youngsters in caps, bulging canvas coats, rubber boots, carrying shotguns that must have looked much too big for them, heeled by a slow-paced, enormous, and obviously philosophic pointer who undoubtedly cocked toward the understanding passer-by a relishingly humorous eye. At the station Joe walked at once to the open side door of the baggage car, where he waited to be boosted aboard. At the end of the short run he accepted our outstretched arms to assist his descent. Thus far he was, at least ostensibly, traveling with us.

The way stations at which we disembarked were pretty much alike—a small frame depot, a water tank, perhaps a half-dozen shabby frame houses, and a store. One had only to take a hundred steps to find one's self in the open country. Stubble fields bounded by stump or "snake" fences of rails, and gently rolling hills, and the lilac gray of bared hardwoods, the silver of popple thickets, the low dark shadows of timbered

swamps. All day we would be stumbling and scrambling and crashing through the great patches of cover, emerging into the open country only to trudge doggedly and uninterestedly across it to the next woodland. It was elementary wisdom to move roughly in a wide circle so that evening would find us not too far from the point at which we were to take the train home. It was equally desirable to keep track of ourselves. In the doublings and turnings and emergings and reënterings incident to a day's hunt it was not at all difficult to get turned about. The landscape, while varied enough in its features, was paradoxically similar in its repeated arrangements of these features. Nothing was more disconcerting than to lose one's sense of direction, and the afternoon waning, and train time near. Nothing was more disgusting than to cut the railroad line two or three miles above or below the station and be forced to slog, tired and heavily burdened, along those miles of uninteresting ties. And nothing was more appalling than to learn at the farmhouse of our inquiry that we were several hills and valleys remote from the station that should

lie over the next rise. The farmer might charge us even as much as a dollar to drive us over in time for our train. That, together with an eighty-cent round trip and the price of our shells, made it a pretty expensive day. Ralph and I had to earn our dollars at a time when odd jobs for small boys were neither numerous nor well paid. But it was all excellent training in topography and the sense of direction.

So much of it was our business. With the rest of it we had nothing whatever to do. The moment we had climbed the fences into the open country Joe took charge. He mapped out and conducted a day's partridge hunting, which as an expert he enjoyed thoroughly. He was glad to have Ralph and me go along, and he was very careful and considerate. He gave us every chance, but if we did not avail ourselves of them, he went on about the business without us. If in our childish ignorance we made up our minds we would hunt a certain cover of our own selection, Joe philosophically let us go to it; but he would have no part or parcel in the matter. We soon learned that it was better to trail obediently whitherso-

ever Joe led us. That was invariably to the birds. Joe's instincts as to "birdy" places were developed to a high degree.

In hunting the cover, too, Joe gave us every chance. He ranged in reference to us; he never left us in the lurch, going off by himself. When moving up through the first faint indications of scent, he waited for us to come alongside. If he got on a point he stanchly held for us. There was no taking advantage by this sterling gentleman of our youth and inexperience. Nevertheless Joe reserved for himself certain privileges which he would not have dreamed of exercising had he been out with Ralph's father. Then he would have played the game to its uttermost rigid convention. For example, it is considered a disgrace for a bird dog to pay the slightest attention to a rabbit. The fact that a highly trained pointer or setter will not even bat an eye in its direction, even when one of these otherwise fascinating creatures leaps from under his very nose, is a wonderful testimony to his integrity; for the bird dog is by nature a hunter and a chaser. His "point" has been developed from the pause before his spring to capture. But in his associa-

Old Joe takes us hunting.

tion with man he has learned to control his lower nature. It sometimes happens of a dark morning, when all scent is heavy and confused, that even the most skillful dog catches a smell of rabbit that half deceives him. It must be that certain conditions alter the quality of otherwise familiar odors. The poor chap is in a quandary. If this indeterminate scent should turn out to be a bird after he had passed it by he would suffer abjectly in reputation. So he hesitates, and half points, trying not to commit himself one way or the other. He casts imploring half glances toward his master; and as the latter draws alongside, he stiffens down, hoping for the best. Then, as bunny darts out before the man's solid kick at the brush, the poor dog drops into an abysm of shame.

Joe knew all this. He appreciated to the full the social error of even acknowledging that rabbits existed at all. In adult company he would have been a model of canine etiquette. But with us infants it was different. Joe indulged himself in an occasional rabbit: smelling it out methodically to its form; jumping it; even chasing it a few paces just to get it well started; looking after it,

his head on one side, with a sort of grave relish. He did this quite openly, without shame or apology, because it amused him. At first we, as well versed as he in the theory of proper etiquette, thought it incumbent on us to punish him. The logic was exact. Sportsmen should punish their dogs for chasing rabbits: we were sportsmen. Joe indulgently allowed us to whip him. He was a large, solid dog. When we had done what we conceived to be our duty in the matter, he shook himself vigorously, and we went on. But there seemed to be a misfire in the sequence, somehow. Joe not only appeared to be wholly unimpressed by our demonstration, but we felt that he had permitted it because of his sense of fairness. He too was perfectly aware of that syllogism. Sportsmen should punish their dogs for chasing rabbits. Joe was amusedly willing to contribute slight and momentary bodily discomfort toward countenancing the delightful fiction that we were in charge.

Another delicate convention which Joe chose to interpret in a broad and liberal way was the matter of holding a point. When a high-class bird dog freezes to a point he is supposed to stay that

way until the bird of its own accord moves away, or his master has flushed it for the shot. If neither of these things happens there he must stick. It does not matter if his whereabouts is unknown; if his master is whistling and shouting in a vain attempt to locate him. There is something of the boy-stood-on-the-burning-deck about the situation.

Now Joe was as stanch on a point as tradition required, no matter how long it took for us to get to him. But we must be getting to him. As soon as Joe was convinced that we had lost him, he took measures. No heroic but foolish and above all time-wasting gestures for him! Inch by inch he crept forward until within pouncing distance. Then he pounced. In doing so he was simply following the methods of his remote ancestors. I do not think he had any very strong hopes of seizing the bird; but he terminated an annoying and idiotic deadlock, and I imagine he got a certain amount of sardonic satisfaction in thus startling the grouse. As it roared away from under his nose, he gazed after it calmly for a moment, then turned to hunt up those two strayed kids of his. Joe never broke point when

we were anywhere available; and he would never have dreamed of doing so when afield with anybody responsible. He could do the boy-on-the-burning-deck stuff with the best of them at proper occasion.

But our supervision was continued even after appropriate bird cover was selected. Ordinarily a good partridge dog would quarter, ranging back and forth in front of his master in an advancing series of diagonals. Every few seconds he would stop to look back, bright eyed, to be sure the hunter had no instructions for him. These, if there were any, were generally conveyed by a motion of the hand. If the man wished to get the dog's attention he uttered the briefest possible single blast on a trilled dog whistle. Instantly the dog's head would appear, up over a log, above the ground carpet, out of the brush, ears up, eyes alight with inquiry as to what was wanted. A gesture toward the bit to be investigated; and at once, without hesitation or question, he was off in that direction. Often no word was spoken for hours, for the grouse was prone to flush wild, and the sound of the human voice was likely to start him out of sight and range. Thus

the man retained the general command of the strategy.

Joe also stopped every few seconds in his slow methodical trot to raise his head or to rear up against some convenient small elevation in order to determine where we were and how we were coming along. But it was emphatically not to look for orders: merely to assure himself that we were not straying off, and that we were going to be near enough for a shot should he discover a bird.

3

But though Joe held us under a discipline that to us high-spirited youngsters seemed galling, humiliating, and not to be borne, he was in other respects very considerate. Joe was one of these efficiency dogs. He stood for only a certain amount of ineptitude. Being a philosopher, he was perfectly willing to hunt for any friend to whom his master loaned him for the day; and to do a good job of it. But in return he expected results. If the man he was with missed his first two or three birds, that was all right; Joe was large minded enough to realize that perfection is hardly come at in an imperfect world, and that

lapses may be expected from the most proficient. But if he went on missing, Joe just quit hunting. Joe could be a very humiliating dog.

His high expectation did not, however, carry over to us two small boys. In the beginnings of our career we did not scratch down many birds. That was too much to expect; but at least we had hitched our go-cart to a star in selecting as our quarry the most difficult bird that flies. Our allegiance never faltered; our enthusiasm never failed. Woodcock and quail we took when we could, but in our stride, as it were; but a bag of them never filled us with the same solemn and uplifted joy as a return with even a brace of "pats." There was something in the crumpling in rocket flight, the long slanting fall, the resounding thump that satisfied for hours. Even in maturer years, after we had graduated into the expert class and bags of ten or a dozen apiece were not uncommon, we agreed that, spaced at proper intervals, as few as three birds kept the hours of a day at a comfortable glow. Often we took our train back at night with only the customary rabbit. We could always get him, and generally postponed him until late in the after-

noon to avoid carrying him about any longer than necessary. Sometimes we postponed him too long; and then we had to clean our own guns. Theoretically we were supposed to do that anyway. It was good for us to do our own dirty work. Servants were not kept to wait on small boys. But we early discovered the affinity between Negroes and rabbits, and the effectiveness of bribery.

Those were the days of black powder. We loaded our own shells. Mine were of brass, and I kept them and reloaded them over and over. If I fired my right barrel more than once without discharging the left, I had to be careful to shift the left shell. Otherwise the top wad was likely to be jarred loose, the shot to roll out, and I to discharge a harmless and humiliating squib. Ralph, who was more of a reckless devil financially than myself, used paper shells from the first; and shortly I fell in line with him.

Black powder made a grand bang and produced a great volume of white smoke and a most entrancing smell. To this day a whiff of it brings back to me the narrow stump-dotted fields of the backwood farms, with their stubble, or their corn shocks like plumed warriors huddled; and

the inconceivably vivid hardwood forests; and the other smell of the wood smoke that magicked the sun into a blood-red ball and the sunlight into a pouring golden mist, touched movement into the quietude of leisure, charmed the world into the brooding peace of Indian summer. Why this picture rather than the closed warm leafy green of the dense cover in September, or the rattling bared limbs of December, I do not know. Our shooting season of those days began before summer had lost its vigor and continued until the New Year. Memory is capricious. The white smoke from the discharge often obscured our determination of the results of our shot. Especially was this true of a damp day. I remember having often to squat low instantly after the discharge, trying to peer beneath the cloud. Had it not been for our dogs we would have lost many a bird squarely hit but invisible to us the instant we had pulled trigger.

Those later in the field can never realize what cleaning a gun really means. Black powder residue was abundant, grimy, sticky, and extremely corrosive to steel. We had to get rid of every trace of it or have a pitted barrel. That was the

ultimate of disgrace and was ineradicable. I have still the sixteen-gauge hammer gun of that youth. Inside it shines as bright and fleckless as a mirror. That means that not only was it thoroughly cleaned every time it was used, but also that it was attended to the evening of each day's shoot. To have left it overnight even once would have been fatal. With modern smokeless one can do that; but never with black powder. Nor, as with smokeless, did a few wipes with some solvent do the trick. You got a pail of screeching hot water into which you thrust the ends of the barrels. Then with a tightly fitting rag on a cleaning rod as a piston, you literally pumped the water up through the barrels and out the breech, and you kept at it until your youthful arms ached. After which, of course, it was imperative to dry the weapon thoroughly. A suspicion of dampness meant rust. And then to oil it in every part: but that was a nice reminiscent smell too. I don't know what that oil was. They sold it simply as gun oil. But there was some magic in it that freighted it with memories. All of which I tell you to account for the rabbits. We scorned avowed rabbit hunters.

We were taught by our fathers to take this exquisite care of our weapons; but I think our mainspring in persistence was our own pride in them. They were both sure-'nough double barrels; none of your made-over muskets, or "Zulu guns," or similar makeshifts. Mine was an English-made sixteen gauge. I think it the first small-bore shotgun ever seen on the Pacific Coast. I first shot it there in 1884. In these days of twenties and twenty-eights a sixteen seems almost vulgarly large, but in my boyhood ten-gauge was the customary field gun, with sometimes an eight for ducks and geese, and an occasional twelve in the hands of a small-bore crank. Men used to go out with me just to see if that pesky little popgun *would* kill a quail. Its barrels were of browned Damascus steel with a beautiful curlicue pattern made by the two metals; and it was, of course, a hammer gun. I suppose it would look very awkward to an eye accustomed to the trim modern hammerless ejectors; but it was a well balanced, hard-shooting little gun, and so beautifully made that it is to-day, after tens of thousands of shots, as tight at the breech as ever.

In two respects we differed from modern prac-

tice. We shot both barrels full choked, scorning as effeminate confession of weakness in marksmanship the more widely scattering charge of the cylinder bores or even the so-called "modified chokes." For one thing we wanted all the range we could get. Late in the year, after the trees had gone bare, our customary quick snap-shooting was occasionally varied by a long-range chance at a "pat" after he had risen above the cover and was darting under a full head of steam among the trunks of the trees down through the forest vista. How he would go! Even in those thoughtless days I never ceased to marvel that he could go so fast and yet steer his way in and out among the limbs. His accuracy was astounding, for if one stood quite still and listened one could hear an occasional *flick-flick* as the stiff short pinions of his wings just scraped the twigs in his headlong flight. To overtake with one's charge of shot that small brown body catapulting at such tremendous speed required nice calculation and steady marksmanship and a long-shooting, hard-hitting gun. Another advantage of the choke bore was that it was either kill clean or miss clean. The compact pattern covered a

small circle, but it was a circle packed with shot. We did not "slobber" our birds.

The other item wherein we were unorthodox was that when in the field we always carried our guns full cock. This was a necessary procedure. Our game allowed us no split-second for preparations. We could not even carry our guns over the crook of our left elbow as may be done in more open field shooting; but must hold them forward in both hands, at the ready. A gun cocked all the time would be a very dangerous weapon in the hands of a shooter of ordinary training and habit. But ingrained in our very natures was the cardinal principle that never, in any circumstances, should the muzzle of a gun point even for an instant toward any living thing we did not wish to kill; and that it should always, except in the very act of shooting, be inclined at an angle to the sky. So instinctive did these precautions become that, as a natural part of the movement, taking no more thought than for the placing of the feet, we crawled under logs, moved about each other, worked our way through the densest cover, with at all times our loaded and cocked weapons as safe as though empty. Safer,

I think; for one who tries to keep his precautions only for such times as he thinks them necessary may sometimes slip in memory or observation. "Didn't know it was loaded" has killed or crippled many a good man; but "consider it always loaded" has never harmed anyone yet.

4

We had in all the years of our sporting careers no accidents, no near accidents; nor do I even remember any accidental discharges, though it is possible one or two such may have occurred. If so they made no impression, for they were bound to be perfectly harmless.

This admirable caution, I confess, was very little based on any very acute sense of the danger of doing otherwise, for when is youth ever heedful? Its strength was that of our pride in sportsmanship. Youth worships convention, common belief to the contrary notwithstanding. The surest way to train a boy to do a thing is to appeal to that sense. We never shot birds sitting; and we never allowed our guns, loaded or empty, to point toward any living thing; and we cleaned them scrupulously at night no matter how late

it was or how tired we were; and we took inordinate pains to search down chance cripples, not because of any consciousness of the virtue of such proceedings, but because of our ardent determination to behave in all matters, great and small, according to the rules of the game.

Both Ralph's father and my own took a great deal of time and trouble to lead us into the way of these conventions. We read eagerly, too, such old-time sportsman's books as *Frank Forrester's Sporting Scenes and Characters*, Bogardus's *Field, Cover and Trap Shooting*, and a boy's book named *Marvin and the Boy Hunters*. From all these sources we gained by a process of absorption.

Nor did we go afield in the larger sense without considerable valuable preliminary training. Before the shotgun period of our lives we had begun with other weapons. Ralph had an air gun, and later a .22; I a heavy-barreled, well made Flobert "saloon rifle," as they were called. The state of Michigan at that time offered a bounty of one cent a head on English sparrows. For several years our main business in life out of school hours and on Saturday was the collection of that

bounty. Since, as is well known, these birds are distinctively urban dwellers, we had to do our shooting within the city, preferably as near the downtown district as we dared. I do not know why we were allowed to roam the streets discharging comparatively deadly weapons, but rarely did anybody protest. Perhaps it was a more tolerant age; perhaps more ignorant, or, contrariwise, more generally knowledged as to firearms. When every second man on the street is a shooter of something, the prowlings of two small boys squibbing off "BBs" is not so alarming as would be the case nowadays when few know anything about guns and every firearm is as terrible as a six-inch howitzer. Of course, the actual business district was closed to us by the presence of police; but that did not matter. What we wanted was the combination of city streets and trees. Nevertheless, the nearer downtown we could manage, the better the hunting.

We had our regular beats. Each took a side of the street. Somehow we did not even attract much attention. Occasionally a passer-by would pause to watch us for a moment or so. If he did

so from any motive of caution, our conduct must have satisfied him, for we were never warned. We knew, and avoided, a few places where some "old woman"—of either sex—was "cranky." But we were very careful, and had evolved a working system. For instance, we never shot at sparrows on the ground or in the street, no matter how tempting their numbers or range: the bullet might glance. We rarely shot at them atop a roof or on eaves; and then only when they were within easy range and outlined against the sky; the bullet might puncture somebody's shingles, and that would be unfair. For the same reason we were careful about the background to each and every shot, lest we break glass or do other damage. The ideal was a bird tree-perched against a blue sky. Where the spent bullets landed did not concern us; it was sufficient that there was nothing back of a direct hit. As a matter of fact, beyond a very limited range, these tiny BBs could have had little more force than a flicked pebble.

But within their range they were astonishingly accurate. And we shortly became very deadly. We had to be. Consider it for yourself.

We were in serious business. BBs came in boxes of fifty at thirty-five cents a box. To break even financially we must make 70 per cent of hits. At bull's-eyes as small as sparrows and at varying ranges that means very good shooting. Commercially we managed to survive, and even made a small profit. Later the state raised the bounty to three cents a head. Then we were affluent.

The first rather lean year was carried by an unexpected and marvelous bit of luck. It involved our one and only incursion into police territory. Outside their downtown beats the police left us alone; and we in return considered it only polite and politic not to pull off any mischievous and aggravating raids. Whenever on our regular beats we ran across a cop on his way home, we gave a busy imitation of innocent youth returning from a shooting expedition in the country; while he gave as excellent an imitation of believing us. But downtown near the railway station was a tall office building whose eaves and cornices had become infested by large tame pigeons. They seemed to belong to nobody; they were very messy. Somehow it became known to us that the owners of the building

would not exactly shriek for the police were we to shoot these pigeons.

Too good a chance for what was to us big game. And the profits were tempting. The building people could not, of course, offer us any reward for the job; nor, indeed, countenance us in any way. But we were made to understand that we could get twenty-five cents a pair for pigeons at the meat market. So every day or so we made a raid.

It was exciting, fast work, but not wholly comfortable. We had to scout carefully to determine the whereabouts of the local cop. Then we had to wait a favorable hiatus in passers-by. This was downtown, in crowded districts; besides which we were apparently knocking over somebody's tame doves. The range was long—the full height of the building—and the birds took a long, fluttering tumble that attracted much unfavorable attention, especially from indignant old ladies. A crowd always gathered. It was impossible to do more than dart in and out corsair-wise, so to speak; snatching our booty and making our getaway before the storm broke. At least, that was our idea of it. As a matter of fact,

nobody in authority ever interfered with us. It would have been easy to trap us. I imagine the word had been passed along by the victims of those very dirty and noisy pigeons; and I imagine we and our activities were quite well known to the easy-going authorities. It was not a very large city. Our precautions toward safety had probably been amusedly appraised.

But that did not affect our own attitude of mind. As far as we were concerned we were engaged in a respectable business with a 30 per cent margin for an impossible perfection, technically extra legal, but tolerated within certain tacitly understood limits. Somewhat as good respectable bootleggers look upon themselves nowadays. This pigeon business was out of our line. We were uneasy lest we jeopardize our status thereby; but the profits tempted. A sort of hijacking, as it were, for which we could not reasonably expect the customary police tolerance. So, in spite of the thrill of big game and the breathless excitement of raiding, we were glad to finish the job and return to our moderately lawful occasions.

I do not quite know where we originally got our respect for all song birds. Probably it was a

combination of instruction and that sense of sportsmanship again. If one was a sportsman he shot game birds. Anything else was childish. Be that as it may, we never pulled trigger on any but our lawful game or predatory birds.

Old Joe, and later on other setters and pointers, considered it good fun to go walking with us. All dogs like to go walking, but they do not care to do so without a human. Occasionally we invited them to go with us on these sparrow hunts, but not often. It was altogether too obvious that they considered them as walking and not as sporting expeditions. They paid no attention whatever to either our popguns or our quarry, but went busily about their own business of cats and back yards and other dogs. Once in a great while, if a sparrow happened to fall out of a tree before their very noses, they might pause to sniff at its body in a detached manner. Then they looked up at us in the quizzical tolerance of a grown-up for an infant with a toy choo-choo. We could not stand that sort of thing. So we preferred to leave them home. They were much too sportingly high minded for the rough-and-tumble of everyday business. We despaired of

making them understand that its meager profits, frugally saved, bought the powder and shot and railway fares that made possible the higher life in its season.

5

This sort of thing made us excellent rifle shots, but it taught us also how to handle any sort of a gun. Then when at the age of ten we acquired our sure-enough shotguns we began trap-shooting at clay birds once a week on the "island." That the "island" was well within the city limits, and that the trap-shooting was there carried on without any formal permission was again illustrative of the free-and-easy toleration of the times. On one side of it flowed the river, fringed with lovely and lofty cool trees; on the other was a narrow canal, across which were the houses of the city. The range was lengthwise the island. Sharply right-hand targets were thrown fairly into the lushness of the trees. I can remember the rapid rain-like patter of the shot, and the surprised flights and callings of birds startled from their branches, and the green leaves sifting slowly down for some time after. Left-hand birds

were, of course, projected toward the houses across the canal. Theoretically the distance was so great that the shot charges could not reach them; and everybody blazed away in that direction as boldly as in any other. Nevertheless, once or twice we were swooped down upon by irate housewives holding out in their palms as exhibits to back vociferous accusation indubitable pellets of number eights. Probably occasionally a charge "balled" and so carried beyond its normal range. We boys were vastly awed by these large red-faced and irate females, but our elders seemed to take things easily. They examined the shot and laughed, and explained with a negligent and tolerant humor that the shot was spent and wouldn't kill a flea, and blarneyed the lady until she had to laugh. When she had departed, partly mollified, more than a little doubtful, and uttering warnings as to "next time," they dismissed from their minds this incursion of womenfolk into their affairs and returned to doing exactly what they were doing before.

The shoots were weekly, three o'clock of a Saturday afternoon. The men drove to the place in buggies of one sort or another. Some of these

were very smart; the horses fine, well groomed animals; their heads held to a high and haughty angle by the overhead check rein that few had imagination enough to realize as cruel and unusual punishment. They drew what was known as side-bar buggies, vehicles of the lightest possible type, with gossamer-like wheels, small, shiny box bodies, and high, narrow seats. In a socket to the right of the patent-leather dashboard was a slender whip with silver bands around its butt and a gay colored silken snapper at its tip. The harness too was made of the fewest and slenderest straps that would do the business; but always on the reins, at appropriate outstretched distance, were either loops or large wooden buttons. These were to assure the driver a good hand hold when the fiery untamed cut up. Ralph and I had them on the reins of our pony cart. If Don, the black pony, had known about them I think he would have been both flattered and entertained. The majority were satisfied with the more roomy, practical, and conventional top buggy. Old Man Pomeroy drove a shaggy but durable animal from between the two enormous wheels of a breaking cart. But

whatever the status of the owner or the style of his equipage, he drove it himself. The city had not evolved to the point of grooms. He unhooked the check rein and hitched his horse to a tree at a distance that accorded with the beast's susceptibility to firearms. Thus the scales of justice were balanced, for the plutocratic owners of the proudest were forced to trudge the longest distance. Old Man Pomeroy's fuzzy beast dozed peacefully right under the guns.

Each man brought his ammunition in a tin or leather box. It was all hand loaded. Commercially loaded shells were long in the future. Moreover, most of it was home loaded as well. A few were grand enough to hire Billy Pearson at the hardware store to do it for them. Nevertheless, it was a democratic lot. I think there must have been in that little club samples from every grade of society; and the spirit to all by all was of happy-go-lucky joshing equality. Except, of course, in the eyes of us boys. We acknowledged no equality. Some we looked up to almost worshipfully. Others were to us as worms in the dust, and we rather wondered how they could care to go on living. Our criterion had

nothing to do with wealth, business or social standing, or personal worth of character. It was solely concerned with how well the man could shoot. Such a criterion was, of course, highly artificial and absurd. But so are the majority of criteria. In the beginning of my freshman year in college I judged the worth of my fellows by the crease in their trousers. In this case it reduced to negligibility one of the side-bar buggyites, a lawyer who subsequently became an important judge. It elevated to a hierarchy a few such as Old Man Pomeroy.

Old Man Pomeroy wore a slouch hat and baggy old clothes and a long white beard. He was the most unhurried and deliberate individual in my recollection. He drove his shaggy horse deliberately to its hitching post; he disentangled his long form deliberately from between the wheels of the cart; deliberately he set foot aground, and very deliberately he unpacked his gun from its old leather case and pieced it together. Before he would report to the firing squad he got a good ready, and nobody could hurry him. We did things in style. There was an official scorer or referee, who took his job seriously.

"White to shoot, Widdecombe on deck!" he would sing out crisply, thus warning the next marksman to be ready.

And invariably somebody would add, "Pomeroy on the poop deck!" and everybody would roar, for they all knew it would take the old man at least that long to prepare.

They had a lot of fun with Old Man Pomeroy. He maintained a calmly Olympic gravity, but his blue eye twinkled in appreciation. His worn and shiny old gun was a ten-gauge, of course—everybody shot a ten but Ralph and me, and the weapons were all guns used in the field, for the specialized trap gun of to-day had not been invented. Some flaw of metal or accident of a balled charge had bulged it at the muzzle. Barney, the local gunsmith, had hammered it back into shape somehow, and had fitted outside a broad metal band to strengthen it. When, rarely, Old Man Pomeroy missed, there was an invariable appropriate joke which somebody always sang out as relishingly as though it were new.

"Have to get another hoop on your gun!"

When his turn was called Old Man Pomeroy trundled out to the mark, broke his gun, inserted

the shell, closed the gun, took his stance, held it for long seconds.

"Ready?" he drawled at last.

"Ready," repeated the trap puller from his shelter.

Nothing happened for an agonizing interval. There stood Old Man Pomeroy apparently asleep, his left foot forward, his body slightly inclined toward the front, stock of his gun below the elbow, as was esteemed proper in those simple days.

"Pool!" his deep voice commanded at last.

The trap man pulled. Away sailed the target. Still deliberately, too deliberately, it seemed, Old Man Pomeroy raised his weapon. The black powder roared.

"Dead!" snapped the referee crisply. In case of a miss he would have drawled "Lost," dragging out the syllable with the slow, contemptuous relish of a caddy crying "Out of bounds." In this case there could be no doubt, no uncertainty as to whether a minute satellite of the target was a splinter from it or a wad from the gun. Old Man Pomeroy centered his birds. Calmly he broke the gun; removed the shell, which he put in his pocket for reloading; blew the smoke out of the

barrel; squinted down it; closed the breech—and at last gave way to the next man impatiently waiting for his place at the mark.

At the end of the afternoon Old Man Pomeroy was the last—except Ralph and me—to leave. He drove off, humped over in his breaking cart, enveloped by the lazy cloud of dust that accompanied him, into mystery. For of Old Man Pomeroy away from the island I know not one thing, neither of his person, nor his family, nor his business, nor his standing in life. I think they were all humble; I even suspect that Old Man Pomeroy may have been what they used to call a ne'er-do-well, not at all a good example for the young and aspiring. Nevertheless, to this day I cannot recall his long, slow-moving figure, his blue eye, his patriarchal white beard without a little thrill of awe; any more than I have been able to rid myself of the wholly unjust and irrational conception of the Judge as a failure in life. For Old Man Pomeroy certainly smashed 'em!

The afternoon shoot consisted of twenty-five targets per man. In these modern days of automatic traps and five shooting stations and a rattle of discharges, that number must seem

ridiculous. Twenty-five targets would hardly warm a man up! But, then, our equipment would seem equally ridiculous, consisting as it did of one "sling" trap, which had to be set and cocked and released by hand. Jake sat in his dugout doing all these things, and one had to call very clearly to be heard by him. He could, and did, throw the birds according to his own diabolical whim. Some of his angles sent them sharply past the shooter, to right or left. Each man shot at three birds at a time before relinquishing the stand, ending with four. Toward the end it became very exciting, for there were the medals to consider.

The Junior Medal was for those who had never won a medal. The high scorer in the Junior Class wore the medal until the next Saturday, when he relinquished it to the next winner; unless, of course, he himself repeated. If he won it three weeks in succession it was his for keeps, and he graduated into the Senior Class. When Ralph and I began to shoot we were so very small, and were so inexperienced, and our guns were so ridiculously small gauge that a third class of medal was solemnly added to the list. They called it the Boys' Medal. Intended first off as a kindly

deed for the benefit of us two only, it shortly became recognized as a valuable safeguard to the chances of Juniors. For, of course, until one of us had won the Boys' Medal three times in succession we could not become Juniors, and as we gained in practice we shortly became good enough to beat any Junior. But between ourselves we were too evenly matched. That gold medal adorned Ralph's breast one week and mine the next; but neither of us was able to beat the other three times in succession. It was only after a long and bitter struggle that finally the medal was mine. I must have had a streak of luck, for Ralph was always a better shot than I, though I would have combated that idea fiercely at the time. At any rate, I became the owner of the one and only Boys' Medal ever issued; for after I became a Junior there was only one boy left, and as he could not very well shoot against himself, he accompanied me on up.

So in the Junior Class the struggle was renewed, complicated by the fact that we had considerable outside competition. I forget whether Ralph or I was the first to become a Senior. However, we both got there in time. Only just

the other day I ran across my medals. Their years laid away in safety and forgetfulness had had a bad effect on them. They were very much smaller than when I used to wear them on the outside of my jacket; and the massive gold had somehow thinned to the thickness of paper. But they are gold, and my monogram is on them, and they dangle glitteringly from cross-bar pins: "Boys' Class; Won May 5, 1888."

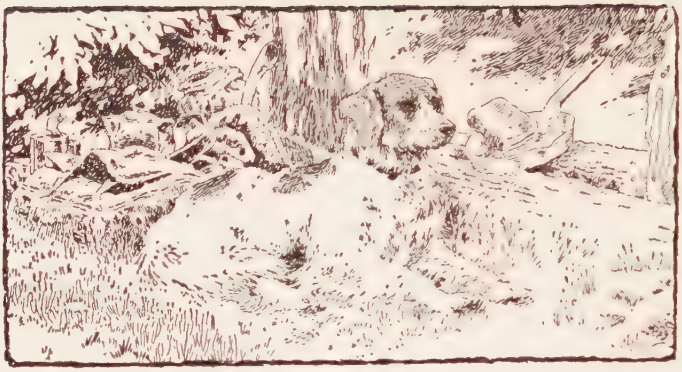
The afternoon is late. The leveling sun shafts through the river trees have turned golden in the dust of departure that hangs motionless where the eddying breezelets have left it. The top buggies have trotted soberly away; the side-bar buggies have swirled off with a dash. To-day Mrs. Voorheis came for her husband in her victoria drawn by a matched team of bays. It was driven by the Voorheis "man," who had coiled the garden hose and put on his hat and coat to do so. Except for this lack of livery the equipage was very smartly turned out; but it would never have occurred to the Voorheis or anybody else that the incongruity might have been eliminated. Certainly it would never occur to the Voorheis "man"! Mrs. Voorheis billowed with oceans of

light summer frills, and she had a flat little hat that tilted over one eye, and she shielded her face with a tiny doll-size parasol, hinged on its stick so she could incline it at any angle. She was very dainty, and very much frightened by the mere presence of guns, and certain that the haughty horses would run away when they saw them. Furthermore, for some reason obscure to Ralph and myself, she found all the fascinating details of our sport either terrifying or "horrid." At least, she said so; and the men crowded about the victoria to hear her say so. She made the Boys' Class tired! In the first place, she was of immense age and should know better (I suppose she must have been in her early twenties); in the second place, it was self-evident to our coolly scornful appraisal that she was either acting silly to attract attention, or else was a complete feather-brain. No normal mind could really consider our occupation as horrid. However, she departed, at last, the victoria contributing its quota to the golden dust haze. Only Don, the black pony, is left, turning his wise head hintingly in our direction.

But we are not yet ready to go. We must help

Jake pick up the missed targets that did not break as they sailed to earth, and get ourselves greasy assisting in the bestowal of the trap in the shed. Our assistance is voluntary. We simply hate to break away. At last we untie the impatient Don, and climb into the two-wheeled cart, and trot away smartly through the dust haze. Our one time to trot smartly is when, as now, Don is headed toward home. We are humped over stolidly in a faithful imitation of Old Man Pomeroy. Prominent on the chest of one or the other of us glitters the medal, and the glow of its gold is matched by a glow within.

At Ralph's house Old Joe rises deliberately and saunters over to take a diagnozing smell. He sniffs casually at our legs, a little more considerингly at the black-powder aroma from Ralph's gun. The younger dogs are frantically aroused by it; but not Old Joe. He knows the difference. If this out-of-season monkey-work with guns has any interest for him at all it is probably only to a not too roseate hope that it may teach us to miss 'em less often. Old Joe yawns and returns to his doze in the last of the sunlight and his dreams of the autumn.



III. Deuce

THE highly specialized business of grouse shooting in the Michigan of the past century required a highly specialized dog. The prized modern development would have been a joke; we would not have given them kennel room. I suppose man breeds for those characteristics he desires, and that therefore the present-day weedy built, high-strung, flashy, speedy bird dog is what he wants. But it seems to me that we have been led astray by mistaken ideas. The thing we have now is a thing to take prizes with—once a

year—instead of a durable companion through all of every day, if necessary, of the shooting season. The ideal we have bred toward is the bench-show dog and the field-trial dog. Especially the latter.

What is wanted in field trials is a creature that can go at top speed for an hour, that will cover the widest range in the shortest time. I am taking for granted nose and training. After that hour the handler is indifferent as to whether his charge might be able to continue or not. So he breeds for "snipiness," fine lines, nerves rather than nerve. And he gets what he is after. The difficulty is that he sets the style. The modern bird dog has not the stamina to do the work. He must have his doubles, like a movie star, to take his place when a few hours have exhausted him. The fine big upstanding, well boned, balanced setters of my youth have almost disappeared. The dog fancier of to-day would say he was "coarse." Nevertheless, he was a real bird dog. In a field trial that was a real test he could beat the modern product paws-down. That would mean a genuine dawn-to-dark hunt, and another the next day, and another the day following. The test would be birds found *and held*.

Why, it never occurred to us that we needed more than one dog apiece; and there were periods when we hunted four days in succession!

The ideal "pat" dog should first of all be of black and white coat. That was a simple matter of visibility in the dense cover. Especially was this desirable if he happened to have worked out of sight and then to have frozen on a point. In the tangle we found it almost impossible to determine the whereabouts of such camouflaged breeds as the Gordon or Irish setters, or even an English setter with too much black. No conscientious dog will break a point, so many the exasperating minutes did we tramp back and forth, whistling, peering, angrily prayerful that the bird would flush and so release our coadjutor from its spell. Therefore we used either pointers, or Llewellyn or English setters. The setters, other things equal, were preferable. Their long coats caught cockleburrs, to be sure; but, on the other hand, they were a needed protection. Even Old Joe, wise as he was, could not avoid scratches, gashes, and a bloody tip of the tail. For no good bird dog can do his work properly unless he continuously sweeps his tail first far to the right and

then far to the left in the rhythm of his motion. Tie his tail and he would be bird-dumb. I imagine just as some people would be word-dumb if you tied their hands.

He should further have the bone that makes for stamina. It goes without saying that his nose should be keen and his hunting temperament well developed. Those are the ordinary natural qualifications. But in addition he must possess a native and original intelligence over and above that sufficient to the quail dog. There have been some very successful morons among the quail dogs of my acquaintance; but never a really first-class "pat" dog who was not as wise as a treeful of owls. Your quail dog races over the fields and stubbles at a gallop, his head high to catch the scent. He starts out at a diagonal to the right ahead of his master; proceeds a certain distance; then turns on the diagonal to the left. In this manner he quarters back and forth, sweeping the whole of a wide countryside. His game is a covey, which must necessarily throw out a strong scent as compared with a single bird. Naturally his master has started him in down wind. All he needs now is to keep it up until he smells some-

thing, then to slow down until he gets his point.

Let him try these tactics on the wily "pat"! His wide range and his speed would result in racket and crash enough to flush an elephant, let alone as wary a bird as this. It would probably never occur to him that the faint elusive first scent of the single close-lying bird meant anything important until the grouse had whirred away ten, twenty yards in front of his astounded nose. His conscientious plunging attempt to do his usual mathematical crisscross through heavy cover would soon reduce him to a tongue-hanging, gasping panting that could hardly smell a skunk. He would undoubtedly reveal plenty of birds; but he would not get within point of any of them; and all his master would know of their abundance would be the roar of distant invisible departure. There are fewer mechanics in this "pat" business but much of that original adaptation to particular circumstance which we call thinking—except when animals do it.

2

After we had left the tender paws of Old Joe we hunted over a number of dogs, all of them

good, some of them better than good. Then, curiously, and gratifyingly enough at the same time, we each were favored by the gods with our super-dogs.

Deuce was a Llewellyn setter of the famous Count Gladstone strain. He might have been called a white dog with several large black markings. Two prominent body spots determined his name. He came to us as a puppy; and, except for the elementary school principles, acquired most of his training in the field under my own eye.

Deuce was an aristocrat not only by blood but by nature; and a courteous kindly gentleman besides. He accompanied me everywhere, even to call on the most formal of my friends, and was always welcome for his engaging manners and quiet self-effacement. Pacing composedly into a drawing room at my heels, he greeted old acquaintances with the drawn-back wrinkled lips of a doggy grin, sneezed companionably once or twice, and lowered his ears in token of affability. To strangers, on my suggestion rather than command, he offered the grave paw of politeness. Then he curled himself in an inconspicuous corner whence he did not stir until I was ready

to depart. No insisting on attention after the insufferable habit of the family pet; no usurpation of a central position over which everyone stumbles; no plebeian sprawling out even in the removed corner of his choice. He arranged himself always daintily, in a half circle, his forepaws doubled against his chest, his head resting on his hind paws, his magnificently feathered tail swept forward around his nose. No matter what the duration of my call, he never stirred. Nor, on the other hand, did he permit himself to sink into that deep slumber wherein dogs chase or are chased to the symptoms of jerking legs and muffled yips. His kind and intelligent eyes either rested dreamily on his human friends, or were veiled by a light doze. Housewives whose tabu against dogs in the house was fanatical made an exception in favor of Deuce. This was never taken at my solicitation. Indeed, I always informed him that he would have to stay outside. But the undiminished cordiality of his grin, and his instant philosophic acceptance of the door mat always ended by an invitation. And one demonstration of his beautiful manners fixed his status.

Sometimes he was offered food—a bit of cake

or sandwich from the tea table. He took the gift daintily, laid it down, ducked his head and rolled his eyes upward in thanks, but also in deprecation and apology at the refusal. Few humans can apologize as gracefully as a dog; or, indeed, accept an apology so whole-heartedly—as when you step on him and hasten to assure him it was an accident. I had instructed him not to eat food unless I gave it to him myself. This was a precaution against poison, but Deuce applied it to all occasions and risked discourtesy rather than disobedience. He always arose and stepped forward, however, and accepted the offering in his mouth, thus indicating his appreciation of the compliment. We possess at this moment a worthy but plebeian-minded dog who occasionally refuses such tea-table offers, generally because he has something the matter with his tummy. He does not bother to rise from a vulgarly sprawled position, but rolls his eyes and perhaps feebly wiggles his stump of a tail the while he weakens even this scanty acknowledgment by a shudder of loathing. He does not mean to be rude, but he lacks utterly Deuce's gentlemanly instincts.

Deuce had the commanding advantage of great physical beauty. Physical beauty is a social advantage, whatever sobersides may try to foist on us as common sense. Not that it is by any means sufficient in itself; but it does give one a start over the ugly-but-worthy. It not only predisposes favorably, but it can command a certain charity of forgiveness for lacks or commissions. A really good-looking person need not be quite so interesting otherwise; and she can get away with a modicum of frightfulness or imbecility. If worst comes to worst, one can always look at her and think of something else. Deuce's figure was graceful, his head finely molded and speakingly intelligent, but above all his coat was long and of that soft and sheeny texture peculiar to very fine hair in its silkiest condition. It was a coat "one loved to touch." Undoubtedly this pulchritude helped him with the aforementioned housewives, but it would not have carried him far without his polish of manner.

3

Deuce knew all about canoes. At that period of my life I was a great deal in the northwoods.

Deuce went along. A few gentle taps on the head with the paddle sufficed as indication to him that restlessness and popularity did not dwell together in a laden canoe. He learned to leap aboard as lightly as a thistledown, accurately into the nest that had been left for him amid the carefully stowed duffel. There he would rest his chin on the gunwale or the thwart, gazing with a lively but immobile interest on things that passed. When at a break or at the end of the day's journey, he debarked without unstable floundering, gathering himself for a light cat-like leap. While we performed the rather arduous labor of making camp in this virgin wilderness, Deuce examined the immediate surroundings with an appraising nose, returning every few minutes to cock his ears for possible orders. Our finished arrangements were often very crude; but Deuce always accepted his designated sleeping place unquestioningly and made himself politely at home.

One thing now strikes me as curious which I never noticed at the time. When our travel lay pack-burdened along the forest tracks Deuce most often trotted gravely at our heels; but much of the time, as was natural, he investigated

abroad through the woodland to right and left of the trail. We never paid any attention to his absences, for he was accustomed to keep tabs on us, and we knew he would always show up. Now there were plenty of grouse in that country. They were not what one would call sporting grouse, even had we the weapons or the inclination to pursue them; for they were scattered in a big unbroken forest, and when flushed they generally flew into the tree overhead and perched there. Occasionally we potted a few with a .22-caliber pistol, for we were living largely off the country. So unsophisticated were these birds that we could often get three or four from the same tree, if we were careful to shoot the lowermost first. They were toothsome and welcome delicacies, but they were not "pats" to us. Nor, as I think back, could they have been to Deuce. In his wanderings off the trail he must have run across them even oftener than did we. Normally a grouse scent would hold him in an unbreakable point for as long as the bird remained. I never saw a stauncher dog. Ralph and I have missed him—or Duke, Ralph's super-dog—for as long as a half hour, only to find him at last aquiver

in the classic attitude. What did he do about it? Did he ignore the birds as none of his summer business? That seems against nature, for to the bird dog there must be a thrilling ecstasy in the hot scent of game, an ecstasy distilled from many, many generations of racial memory. One can control but one cannot ignore the basic instincts. Did he enjoy them and then flush them, after the manner of Old Joe? Or did he practise a deliberate policy of avoidance, so that the first faint scent warned him to turn aside from a temptation that might ensnare him if too nearly savored? I do not know. But I do know that we were never delayed by his absence; we never left the trail to hunt him up; we never gave him a thought. And I know further that whatever his tactics they carried no deterioration into the hunting months of the autumn.

These nightly bivouacs were necessarily sketchy affairs. We chopped and smoothed scant space for our light balloon-silk tent; we built ourselves the luxury of a balsam bed; we cut two green logs between which we built our cooking fire. We were ground dwellers, for we had no time for such permanent camp luxuries as rustic

tables or shelves on which to bestow our belongings. Our foodstuffs, cooked and uncooked, lay about temptingly accessible. Deuce was fed once a day; after we had finished our own evening meal. It never occurred to us, or to him, that he might raid the provisions. It was not done, you know.

Deuce was a sportsman; it was, indeed, his main business in life; but he never could understand why a sensible man should want to go fishing. Roosevelt, I remember, had the same point of view. We told him he could stop in camp if he wanted to; but he could not quite bring himself to stay home from any excursion, no matter how imbecile. He followed our progress downstream from a parallel course well within the fringe of the forest, whether from reasoned intelligence as to the avoidance of back casts, or from a determination firmly to disassociate himself from any suspicion of participation, I do not know. In the interest of our sport we forgot all about him, but I can remember occasionally through my preoccupation the gravely pitying disapproval of his seated figure framed in the green shadow of the forest. Once in a long while, at the conclusion of a particularly exciting battle, catching perhaps

Deuce shows disapproval of fishing preparations.

the reflex of exhilaration, he would tiptoe deliberately across the flood course of the stream, sniff fastidiously at the flopping trout, gaze a penetrating moment into my eyes, sigh deeply, and return to his distant wearisome attendance. I am loath to hint at a defect in so admirable and lovable a character as Deuce, but even those nearest perfection are human and livable only through the possession of amiable foibles. Like many great gentlemen his sense of humor was not outstanding. He was a grave dog, unwilling to blur his perceptions as to the more delicate correspondences by any abandonment to the robustious. This might be most evidently observed in the presence of a puppy in the face-chewing, come-on-let's-chase-each-other-irregardless age. To such a one's large-pawed, galumphing invitations Deuce opposed so complete a head-raised, far-eyed obliviousness that that puppy seemed actually to cease to exist. As an enthusiastic fisherman myself, and also as one who has always entertained the profoundest respect for Deuce's finer discriminations in life, I like to think that this small lack in his character accounts for his attitude toward fishing. I am

afraid it cannot be argued in his defense that dogs in general do not care for fishing; that it is outside their natural habit. But so are motor cars and airplanes out of their natural habit. And I know any amount of good fishing dogs; dogs who are mad about fishing; and who have to be forcibly restrained from leaping upon the landed prize lest they become tangled with hooks and gaffs. I know also several dogs who are very successful fishermen on their own, even dragging to the bank salmon almost as big as themselves. And even dogs who are not successful fishermen at all, but who nevertheless persist, pacing slowly chest deep in the water near shore, head cocked over to see down into the green and wavering depths, eyes alight, tail aquiver, occasionally plunging vainly after the minnows that instantly scatter.

4

I have touched on these various points, little related to the field work that was Deuce's reason for being, to bring out the fact that he was no single-minded specialist. Most bird dogs merely exist between seasons. The exuberant expansion

of their natures contracts, withdraws, like the fringe of a sea anemone, to the inhibited waiting accomplishment of only the necessary small things. They doze long hours in the sun, dreaming of the autumn woodlands, as may be noted by the twitching of their paws and nostrils and their smothered small cries. They go about their unavoidable doggy business almost absent-mindedly. The unthinking admire their beautiful aristocratic aloofness. The truth is they are in exactly the same situation as these absorbed business men who have developed no outside interests, and who are therefore tongue-tied, uneasy, and stupid when away from their offices. I am speaking now of the bird dog who is actually used on birds; not the setter or the pointer kept solely as a pet or taken afield only two or three times a year. The latter are no different from any other dogs, expect for the pathetic puzzled possession of those instincts for the hunt which when awakened become consuming passions. I have always felt sorry for these birdless bird dogs, untrained, perverted by circumstance to quartering the miniature cover of a garden, pointing lizards or chickens or robins on the

lawn. Since taking up permanent residence in California I have never owned another setter. There are many other good breeds from which to choose a companion. If I had a bird dog now I think I would feel a responsibility to supply him with the materials for his functioning; and that is impossible. I do not think I could contemplate with equanimity either the poor creature's puzzled and groping perversions or substitutions; or—worse—assist at the atrophy into a fatty and fatuous eunuch-like placidity of a fine and rare especial gift.

But perhaps not. It is difficult to evaluate. *Is* the crowded hour of glorious life in a long succession of dull drab months of waiting preferable to a continuous and balanced efficiency in small contentments? As one child to another: would you really want to be a fireman of occasional heroism and thrill in a desert of somnolence?

Of course, there is the alternative exemplified by Deuce. He was able to close his office and devote himself intelligently and interestedly to other things. But Deuce was a cosmopolite, an exception, a being quite apart from the ordinary

tired business dog. To bring out this point has been the reason I have shown him first in the extraneous elegancies of life rather than in the field of his transcendence.

5

Times had changed a bit since the days Old Joe had first taken us afield. We were grown to man's stature if not to man's years. The gradual civilizing of the farms near the city had by the distraction of the cover rendered the grouse scarce; so now we had to make longer journeys. Up to the very recent days of motor cars and cheap guns, this intensive clearing of the land was the chief factor in the scarcity of game. Shooting had very little to do with it. "Pats" do not care for cleared and tidy wood lots. Ten years after my Michigan days had ended I returned for a brief season. Ralph and I revisited for old times' sake our old country near Big Rapids. Since we had last seen that region the place had grown into a large industrial city. Yet our accustomed round, not far beyond the present suburbs, yielded us as many birds as ever. Farming had not gone ahead as fast.

Even at that, our reachings out were not so very far from home; perhaps two hours on the train, a tier or so of counties away. But this involved a stay overnight—over two nights if we could manage it. We became intimately acquainted with the country hotel.

It was a wooden frame affair. The "office" was on one side of the narrow hallway from which the stairs mounted; the dining room on the other. In the tiniest inns, where the proprietor, his wife, and one "hired girl" were the whole staff, that finished downstairs. A huge round wood-burning stove occupied the middle of the office. This, in the cold season, was stocked up to almost red heat; and about it in chair-tipped somnolence we dozed after a hard day and a heavy meal. Occasionally someone might puff in from the stinging cold outside, red faced, the ear warmer of his peaked cloth cap pulled down, a knitted tippet wound about his neck and tucked into the breast of his blanket jacket, yarn mittens on his hands, his lower extremities protected by thick felt boots with rubbers buckled over the feet. It was the uniform of autumn and winter and had the merits of being warm, cheap, and

procurable at any wayside store. With none of these men did we ever attain any great degree of acquaintance. Some of them knew and nodded to us, or even paused for a brief word, but there seemed to be little of the spirit of sociability, even among themselves. They talked to one another low voiced, with long pauses. There was, however, no sullenness in this taciturnity. It was more like a preoccupation, as though a necessity compelled them below the surface of the moment to an unremitting steadfastness against life. It seemed, somehow, as though the maintenance against the pressure of harsh circumstance could be assured only by an unrelaxed vigilance; that any yielding even for a moment to small graces or enjoyments would open a breach to the enemy. Relaxations there were, but formalized, at stated times: the church sociable, the county fair, the circus, the semi-occasional road show at the "opery house." Then, as it were, prepared and understood insulations could be left on guard. On chance occasion one dared not desert the stern opposing integrity of one's soul.

We did not know it, but we were still living with the pioneer. To us the pioneers were over

the skyline of time and space. The lot of the farmer, even to-day, is admittedly a hard one; how otherwise account for his relief as a lively recurrent political issue? He appears to work harder than many, for less profit as expressed in money. I have a very good friend who owns and runs a ranch. When occasionally strangers ask him what he does for a living he always answers blandly:

"I work for three banks in town."

Nevertheless, as compared with the farmers in our old "pat" country of thirty or more years ago, there are compensations. The houses are comfortable; there are roads, and flivvers or better, and telephones and movies and mail deliveries and radios and various mechanical devices. It is unnecessary to go farther to shade the contrast. From one's labor, in final analysis, one buys life and a living. These men who beat the snow from their shoulders and the numbness from their hands as they entered our stuffy hot little hotel offices lived in an isolation hardly to be understood nowadays. The miles of their remoteness were ridiculously few as measured by our modern conceptions; but they were miles of

road-by-courtesy, deep-rutted winding wheel tracks seeking a feasible way among the stumps and bog holes and sands and hollows of the pine burnings. When it takes a man two or three jolting hours to get there and back, he does not often venture; especially when he must use the already tired work horses and the springless wagon. Once on the farm his isolation is almost complete. He cannot telephone a neighbor, for there are no telephones. Communication with even that other farmhouse in plain sight atop the hill yonder demands a long slow trudge afoot; or the wearied horses must be roused again. Small wonder that there was little visiting back and forth, even after hours.

"After hours" was in this case a significant expression, for leisure came only after many of them. Winter and summer the pioneer farmer turned out between four and five o'clock. I do not quite see why he had so to arise in the black dark of winter, nor what he did in the long interval before daylight that could not just as well have been done later. Habit, I suppose; the relentless urge of a habit he dared not break lest even so slight a softness of yielding should offer

advantage to the antagonist against which he so steadfastly opposed the integrity of his soul. Before breakfast was ready he did the "chores," a succession of labors that would by some nowadays be considered quite a good day's work in itself. Ploughing and harrowing and seeding and weeding, and the pruning of orchards, and the harvesting, and the rest of usual farm routine must be done, of course—a relentless, repeating, never-ending round of duties that will not brook postponement. But somehow there must remain over certain small change of time to be expended on the corpus of the farm itself. There is the willow thicket in the black bottom. Eventually, when that is all cut, and burned, and uprooted, the land might grow celery. Already about a third has been clipped and trimmed. We know its small compact brush piles well. Quail flushed from the buckwheat fields slant to them as refuges, and there they will lie under the quivering point until we dislodge them by repeated kicking. Or the meadow drain ditch is to be carried the few feet farther permitted by a snatched half hour. Or mayhap there is just daylight enough left to finish placing the puller over another of

the sprawling deep-rooted pine stumps. It is thus, little by little, bit by bit, that the farm has been shaped from the crude wilderness, without capital, in the fleet stray minutes left over from making a living.

After supper there are more "chores"; with lights out, you may be sure, not long after.

In the winter farm rests. It is a time of comparative leisure—with only the stock to take care of, and the cordwood to be felled and cross-cut and split and hauled, and a fine chance to knock down some more of the willow thicket, and a few little things like that! Merciful, however, are the short days of the north latitudes.

I am not trying to draw a picture for pity. I do not believe these men were to be especially pitied beyond the compassion we must accord to the lot of mankind pushing blindly against resistances toward an unknown goal. From our point of view the life was unthinkably harsh and cruel; but then it was not our life, nor could it be. It was their life; and to it they were "compensated," as we say of a watch or an aneroid barometer. They must have obtained from it some deep inner correspondence which in spite

of themselves satisfied a basic necessity. It sometimes did regrettable things to some of them. Evaluated by a coldly abstract unrelated standard, one cannot deny that they were illiterate, uninformed, and illogical in their judgments of affairs transcendent of their countryside, obstinate and narrow-minded in their views, and sometimes harsh and cruel in their adherence to them. But can there be unrelated standards? And does not any life—even the most enlightened and prosperous—do regrettable things to some people? It is not by the regrettable things that one can judge. Life warps green fiber wherever it may grow.

6

Ralph and I got on well with these people in general. The latter-day farmer posts his land and issues forth indignantly at the sound of a shot. He is quite right. Of the horde of city fellers who pour forth armed each week-end, not one in a hundred is a sportsman, or has even rudimentary ideas about trampling crops, or blazing away in proximity to live stock, or shutting gates, or knocking down fences. He, as a class, is a destruc-

tive nuisance, and I do not wonder that the landholders' patience has been worn very thin. Besides that, the modern farmer probably owns a hammerless and would himself like a little sport of his own on his own land.

But in those days the farm weapon was likely to be a converted smoothbore musket, or a "Zulu gun," or the cheapest sort of single barrel. It was used mainly for hawks and crows. When the farmer hunted at all he whistled up the farm dogs and went after rabbits. He had no interest in birds. Wing shooting was beyond him. So far from objecting to our activities he often volunteered information.

"You boys ought to take in that neck of popples over yonder. I see a bunch of pa'tridges in there yisterday."

So complete was his innocence as to how the thing was done that I remember one time when it won over for us a crabbed old fellow who would at first have none of us. He was an irascible critter who a short time before had had a cow peppered with number eights by some careless fool. We reasoned with him in vain. He was wholly disinclined to believe that we were

careful and experienced persons; that we always looked where we shot; that we closed gates and shot hawks and were generally worthy and valuable citizens. Nor did it matter that there was not a cow nearer than half a mile. We did our best with him for the reason that we had just flushed a tempting covey of quail which had sailed over his fence into a patch of low weeds, where we knew they lay. That made no difference.

"You can't see 'em in there anyway," he clinched his refusal.

"We don't have to see them: we shoot them flying," retorted Ralph.

This evidently stirred his curiosity.

"Well," he conceded, "you can come across the fence and scare 'em up just once. And then you've got to git out. If you try to sneak in again I'll have the law on you!" he warned truculently. "I won't have them dogs chasing my sheep."

I imagine Deuce and Duke must have been deeply mortified at the ignorance of such a suggestion. We seized the concession with alacrity. I killed the first bird as it rose. Then Ralph

made a neat double. As the rest of the covey flushed en masse we accounted for three more. Deuce and Duke retrieved them. We turned to find the old man almost stuttering with excitement.

"By Jingo!" he cried, "I never see anything like that! By Jingo, you boys can shoot! Come on, let's git some more! They lit over yander past the crick."

We followed the covey with him and made a nice bag; and had the greatest difficulty in getting away. He knew where there were some more, he said; and he wanted to show us where they were; but he had no good grouse cover on his land, and we had no time for quail unless we could take them in our stride.

7

As we were ourselves early risers we deserted the office soon after eight o'clock. The rooms in these hotels were all alike, eight or ten feet square; flimsy boxes, with small rag rugs on bare floors, a bed, two straight-backed chairs, a washstand, and a bureau. They opened to right and left from a narrow hallway down the center

of the building. A single window without cords or counter weights gave ventilation, provided you could pry it open. There was no source of heat in the whole second story. At times it was bitter cold, so that we lingered not over our toilets, and the water frozen in the pitcher was proved no legend. However, the beds were provided with home-made quilted "comforters" in abundance; which made us snug enough once we were beneath them. Deuce and Duke slept on the floor alongside. We spread our canvas shooting coats for them. In those garments was little softness for the body but a most comforting smell for the spirit.

I do not remember the exact hour we caused ourselves to be roused. I do know it was in the black night, long before even the first gray of dawn. By daylight we must have breakfasted and be anywhere from two to ten miles away. It was desperately cold in those ice boxes of rooms. Anybody less young and fanatical might have lingered regretfully in the cosy warmth of the comforters, gathering resolution for the teeth-chattering lighting of the kerosene lamp on the bureau yonder. We leaped like firemen to the

knock at the door. In less than a half hour we had breakfasted. Wrapped in heavy ulster coats over our shooting clothes we stepped into the starry crackling frost of the morning where awaited us a two-seated surrey. Deuce and Duke crouched in turn expectantly before it. We boosted them in; ourselves clambered aboard. The muffled driver clicked at the horses. We were off!

To us at the time this procedure seemed so normal that we gave it no thought. But consider: in order to start us out at this ungodly hour before daylight, somebody had to get up at least an hour earlier to light the fire and cook the breakfast; and somebody else must feed the horses and hitch them up and drive them to the door. The price of rooms was fifty cents apiece; of breakfast, twenty-five. We paid for the all-day use of the team and the driver a dollar and a half.

The drive was often pretty cold, the air biting keenly at the inside of our nostrils. Deuce and Duke lay on our feet. We creaked through the darkness in silence, the driver clucking occasionally to his horses as the eccentricities of the road

permitted a brief jog. The skyline was becoming more and more distinct; and after an interval details began to relieve the silhouette of night, hitherto broken only by the lights of lamps in the farmhouses and lanterns in the barns.

Arrival at our destination and good visibility were supposed to coincide; and generally did. We raised the robe and invited the dogs to free our feet. They leaped eagerly to the ground; and at once raced off down the road at the top of their speed for a hundred yards or so, and then back again in the relief of an exuberance that could not be restrained. We shed our ulsters, conferred with the driver as to where and when we were to meet, climbed the rail fence, and fell into the knee-bent long loose swing which is everywhere the woodsman's gait and which alone can answer the demands of long endurance.

The allurement of the first cover generally lay across fields. The dogs romped wildly ahead of us unregarded, working off their surplus of energy, warming up before the serious business that lay ahead. They were as well aware as we that nothing was yet to be expected; and they knew too just what bit of bird country lay ahead

and what to do when they got there. We carried our guns under our arms, our hands tucked in our armpits, trying to thaw them to serviceability. Later the continued exercise, and the glow of birds, would warm them; but just at first, what with the cold drive, and the icy steel of the guns, they were purple and stiff and painful. We experimented with gloves, but found them insensitive and clumsy, even with the trigger finger cut away; though zero weather sometimes forced us to them for a while.

Ralph and Duke and Deuce and I were a good team. We worked together almost automatically, without the necessity of spoken plans. When one of us got a point he signaled, and waited, if possible, before flushing the bird until the other had made his way to a place of vantage. Then the one whose dog was on point moved up slowly until the "pat" roared aloft. Either who could get a shot took it. Or both. Our reactions were so swift and so nearly the same that we again and again shot at exactly the same instant, neither aware that the other had fired until he saw the gun broken for reloading. There was no question of taking advantage of each other.

Birds were too great a prize to risk on the uncertainties of any agreed procedure. Occasionally circumstances permitted us to take turns at the possibilities, as when the birds were using the edges. Then for a time Ralph would saunter in the open field parallel to the thicket, while I wormed my way twenty yards or so inside the cover; after which we would change places. This was interesting work. The man inside was more likely to get the first quick snap-shot as the "pat" sprang into the air; but if he missed, or if there was more than one, then the other had his long-range but comparatively clear chance when the grouse had risen above the lower undergrowth and had squared away in his bullet-like flight down through the trees. Once in so often it might even burst right out into the open fields. In that event it invariably set its course parallel to the thicket and five or six feet above the ground. If it happened to present a straight-away and in range, the shot was easy and a gift from the gods. But such a bird coming directly at one is very difficult. A head-on shot must be delivered like lightning or it is too late. By the time one has turned around the "pat" is almost

out of range. It puzzles one to know which to attempt; and one is dishearteningly likely to succeed at neither. Our confidence in each other's marksmanship, however, was evidenced by the fact that we assumed the crack of the gun to mean a kill unless we were otherwise informed. As a matter of statistics we averaged about one bird for three shells. At birds that really gave us a chance we were deadly; but we took a desperate venture at any glimpse.

Deuce and Duke too worked with the same confidence in each other. Nothing is prettier than the sight of one dog "backing" another. I suppose about everybody knows what that means. The dog doing the backing comes into the attitude of a point merely because he sees his partner pointing. He has no scent of his own to go by, merely his confidence in the other fellow and his willingness to endorse his judgment and honesty. It is very easy to distinguish a "back" from a genuine point; for it lacks that quivering electric rigidity and intentness that the warm scent holds in its ecstasy. The backing dog's interest is in his eyes and in the questing expansion and contraction of his nostrils; and he is

likely, without actually breaking his pseudo-point, to creep forward toward corroboration by his own proper senses. Our dogs needed no such corroboration. Their confidence in each other was unquestioning; and the backing dog held as staunchly as though the birds were under his own nose.

No dog that is even half trained ever breaks shot; that is to say, rushes in at the discharge of the gun; nor, indeed, offers to move at all until motioned forward. That was always to me a beautiful example of passion in control; for the desire to dash triumphantly upon the fallen game must be almost overwhelming. It is the climax, the orgasm of this powerful passion for the hunt that has been so strongly concentrated in these few breeds. With quivering eagerness in leash, head and ears up, eyes snapping, they watched us while we reloaded. At the snap shut of the breech, which they recognized as immediately preliminary to permission, they were on their marks like sprinters. They were both first-class retrievers; which not only means that they could find the dead bird no matter how unfavorable the conditions, but also that they

would bring it to us and deliver it into our hands with hardly a feather ruffled. This return with the trophy was evidently held to be an event; as indeed it was; not to be lightly slurred over or hurried in any way, but to be savored in all dignity. Heads held high, eyes fairly shining with a mixture of triumph and satisfaction and an almost sinful pride, they paced back to us, stately as a parade. Other birds might be near, and we eager to get at them before they flushed; but one experience of those eyes clouded by crestfallen disappointment over the curtailment wrought by our impatience was enough. Thereafter we adhered to due pomp and circumstance.

Not that the convention was unduly rigid. There were times when we happened upon birds in a loosely scattered group, and they lay close, so that the first discharge did not flush them all, and by rapid shooting we were gloriously able to knock down two or three. Deuce and Duke understood thoroughly these golden opportunities and patiently held their places unregarded until the skirmish was over and the last bird flown, watching alertly each as it roared aloft. They knew better than we, often, when a bird

was hit. Sometimes a "pat" would take the charge without visible sign, flying straight and strong and unwavering, only to fall stone dead when its spurt of vitality had run out. Our judgment would have chalked up a miss; but at the release of our signal the dogs would dash away out of sight, to return after an interval, bird in mouth. On one remarkable occasion Deuce took the line of one strong flying "pat" out through the cover, across a field, over a hill, and out of sight, and—we afterward determined—to a tamarack swamp nearly half a mile away. It seemed that he must have been mistaken, for no injured bird could fly unfalteringly so far. We were annoyed, for daylight was precious, and we wanted to get on. Deuce was gone a long time; but he returned with the grouse at last! Yet neither ever offered to follow a genuine miss, merely raising their heads to watch the bird regretfully to the limits of vision. What indications they caught I do not know, for of course I am omitting in this connection those obvious cases where floating feathers showed a plain sign. We were thus very dependent on them, not only to lead us to our game, but to find it for us after we

had knocked it down. Many and many a time we killed, stone-dead, birds we did not see at the moment we fired. This is not as strange as it sounds. Our instinct for the direction of a bird's flight became very accurate, so that regardless of cover we were often able to swing our guns to where he was going to be, with fair confidence that the charge would meet him there. And once in so often we blazed away successfully through a screen of leaves or thin cover that completely shut off vision but was not sufficient to stop the shot. On the other hand, disconcertingly, we might smack a charge into a solid tree trunk! On such occasions we had to depend on our dogs to let us know whether or not we had connected.

This retrieving business was the only weak point in that exquisite politeness which is the breath and spirit of the bird dog afield. I think he must look upon his calling as a consecration, for he seems to have set aside for the time being all the ordinary mundane appeals. Farm dogs may bounce and bristle and threaten, cats may offer: he ignores them, not as one who refrains, but as one unaware, held by the pure somnambulism of a vision. To his field partner he

accords a high and knightly courtesy. There are no petty growlings of jealousy or attempted usurpations of privilege. Each backs the other, gives way to the other in proper season, working in the smooth harmony of an ideal perfected by a convention greater and older than themselves.

But back of this ideal was an instinct even more deeply ingrained, and peculiar not merely to field dogs, but inborn in the whole canine race. I refer to the virtue of loyalty. This alone was powerful enough to overcome. I regret to state that if he saw the slightest chance of getting away with it, Duke would steal my birds and take them to Ralph; and Deuce would steal his and bring them to me. There was no question but that they knew what they were doing; for they would make the most elaborate and surreptitious sneaks on each other; and if Deuce, for instance, managed to get hold of a bird Ralph had shot, he would cut out all the triumphal procession stuff in order to detour elaborately in concealment back to me. It was funny; and the fact that we used to laugh and to toss the booty back to its rightful owner never seemed to make any difference.

As I before intimated, there were no hard-and-fast mechanics to this sort of work; and in the solution of new problems as they presented themselves lay the proof of superiority. Many a time I have seen Deuce, or Duke, before entering a patch of cover, slip quietly around it, sniffing the air, nose upraised, on the chance that some stray air current might convey to him an indication of birds. Then, after the reconnaissance, he would return to us, ready to go on with the matter in the orthodox manner.

Deuce had a remarkable nose. He spent one winter with me in the lumber camps of the northwoods. I had occasion to visit another camp about ten miles distant, to which I made my way on snowshoes across country, following no trails. For some reason which I do not remember I commanded Deuce to stay behind with his friend the scaler. He obeyed for a few days, but then became impatient and followed me to the new camp, where he greeted me in full confidence of a welcome. But note the conditions of this feat: ten miles across a strange country to a place Deuce did not know, snow three or four feet deep on the level, *and a fresh fall that had com-*

pletely obliterated my snowshoe tracks! Yet Deuce had followed that stale spoor unerringly.

And on another occasion, while he was retrieving a kill, he caught scent of another bird, *even with the dead one in his mouth*, just as he had scrambled atop a zigzag-built-rail fence that ran through the woods; and there, teetering precariously, he managed a sort of a point; and I, curious and incredulous, walked forward and by flushing the bird proved the miracle.

Those were the most glorious days of the sport, the apogee, the climax of conditions which had not existed before and cannot exist again. And as the times seem to call forth the man, so Deuce answered to his affinity.

Pointing with a dead bird in his mouth.

IV. Deuce (*continued*)

Deuce became a retired business man in about his middle age, at which time I returned to live in California. Fortunately, as I have pointed out, he had been wise enough to develop many off-season interests, so that he was not left high in the dryness of stupid lethargy as is too often the case with single-minded specialists out of their usual job. He took up with zest the fascinating avocation of following horses; he was able to indulge an interest in a wide variety of smells which heretofore his pro-

fession had forced him resolutely to ignore; he could relax in an ease of social contacts which the austere consecration of his calling had hitherto denied him. Ranch dogs; cats, pelicans or sea gulls on the beach; ground squirrels, even jack rabbits, he could permit to become, not objects of vulgar pursuit, but matters of cognizance and even of a certain amount of research. I like to hope that this was a mellow time of life for Deuce. I do not know. A great many people do retire from professional activity at the full height of their powers for just such a chance to cultivate a side of life for which their inclinations demand leisure. If earthly existence is indeed an opportunity for service, then there may very well be a fine line drawn when continued repetition of even our smoothest working and most cherished perfections can with advantage be laid aside in favor of a more rounded development. Possibly our outcries against the fate that relentlessly withdraws us from our most beloved occupations are, from that point of view, unjustified. That is as it may be; but if Deuce did suffer from this complete and sudden severance from his old perfect corre-

spondences, he was too much of a thoroughbred to mope in vain retrospections. For with the transition, whatever riches of interest the new life held, his career as a bird dog came to a conclusion.

That is a curious situation in view of the fact that in those days California literally swarmed with small game. During the shooting season quail "used," not in coveys, but in astonishing packs counting literally into thousands. I have often checked my horse as the vanguard started to cross my front and have sat for five minutes, marveling at the close-packed procession; running heads low, legs a-twinkle, rank after rank, until there seemed no end to them. The hotly aromatic sagebrush hills were alive with them; so that in a day's shoot if a covey proved difficult, one walked straight on in full confidence that he would find another only just around the bend. And when the multitude rose all together, as they did only when close pressed or an intervening canyon denied them further foot passage, it was like the sudden muffled roar of a waterfall heard by an unexpected chance of acoustics through a woodland silence.

That was only about thirty years ago. To-day there are no quail in California save a pitiful remnant here and there where dense cover has afforded a precarious sanctuary, and in the gardens where they have become semi-domesticated pets. There is a bag limit of fifteen. Once in a while someone with local knowledge and good dogs may bring in such a bag; but oftener even the most persistent enthusiast returns with no more than a half-dozen birds. To any of us at the time of which I write this almost complete wiping out of the lavish abundance we knew would have seemed impossible. Motor cars, cheap guns, market hunting did the trick.

We are wonderful at kidding ourselves until it is too late to do anything about it. Ducks have not yet gone the way of the quail; but they are on the road. Nevertheless, those interested in duck shooting will nine times in ten obstinately close their eyes in denial. They have taken me to their clubs and triumphantly called to witness the clouds of wild fowl that literally darken the sky. In face of such a sight how can one deny that there are as many ducks as ever? How could there be any more ducks? How absurd my

contention that soon we shall not have any ducks!

Agreed that there are a lot of ducks. Agreed that they are indeed a wonderful and thrilling sight. But what these self-jolliers forget is that even I can remember when exactly this same wonderful spectacle obtained in every tule marsh and pond hole from the head of the Sacramento Valley to the foot of the San Joaquin; and that now it can be shown me in only two or three favored localities of rice fields concentration. As though one were to point to two or three shrunken puddles in the aridity of what had once been a wide unbroken sea, saying triumphantly: "See, the water is just as wet as it ever was!" Evidence of the appalling shrinkage of waterfowl is not to be sought in the few concentrations of the remnant; but in the numberless blanks of water and marshland now inhabited only by mudhens and grebes. And a skyful of ducks is not as reassuring as one might at first imagine. Even the most optimistic is unready to claim that there are ever more birds a-wing in the firmament than he can see stars on a clear night. We are told that the visible stars number

about three thousand. It has been estimated that somewhere near three million ducks are legally killed each shooting season.

I am not uttering the conventional wail of the old-timer over the "good old days." The new days are good too. They comprise good things; but the things are different. Nor do I assume the wholly annoying attitude of the man who for reasons of his own swears off from something and then becomes fanatical in his desire to have everybody else swear off. Like our reformed moderate drinkers. I am not even prepared to insist on my belief that it would be a much fuller and more interesting world with such things as ducks than without them. Perhaps the disappearance of that kind of wild life and sport is inevitable with our type of mind and progress; and the new sports and interests are more than compensatory. Personally I no longer go afield; partly because I never have and never will hammer at a disappearing race or one balanced on the edge of decline; partly because I have had my share. Nor do I deny the right of those who, in realization that they are participating in the last phase before change, take their share as

long as it lasts. That is honest and understandable. What I do object to is the fellow who hides behind a wilful and artificial optimism to salve his conscience for indulgence. Or one who rummages absurdity itself to find any old reason for scarcity except the obvious one—himself. Only last evening a very good chap told me solemnly that eventually, he thought, a campaign would have to be undertaken to kill off all the mudhens. The cheerful, clucky, companionable mudhens! Why? Because, he said, they caused a scarcity of ducks by eating all the feed! As though the mudhen was a recent invention! But I have not the slightest doubt that before many years they will be the object of solemn "sportsman's" pursuit, as has become the mourning dove. In my day it was as much a disgrace to shoot a dove as a robin.

The only remedy, if remedy is possible or desirable, is not a denial of conditions, nor even in the passage of laws; but in the realization of desirability by all concerned. I wonder if that is possible? I am no pessimist; but I rather doubt it. There are too many elements involved. By the time the influential ethical morons are educated, it will be too late.

The legal limit for a day's shoot is now fifteen ducks per man. The majority of gunners habitually exceed this. Some do it frankly, employing various expedients to get the birds home. Others befog their own ethical senses by helping some friend fill out his limit; or even by taking afield with them notoriously poor shots, or they buy a license for their wives or for men who do not shoot at all. The people who do these things are not of the rough-neck type; they are your friends and my friends. Their actions are thoughtless. They do not reflect that since there cannot be game enough to go around to each and every citizen some means must be taken to define the class to which it does go. That is why market hunting was made illegal. The law was supposed to restrict the possessors of game to those who could go afield. Market hunting extended the privilege to those who can merely pay. That also is why a personal limit was made to the day's bag; it was supposed further to constrict the class to those of a certain skill. One would suppose that men with investments of some thousands of dollars apiece in the duck game, to take only the least important

consideration, would do sufficient elementary thinking at least to protect their investment. Instead of that they prefer to argue heatedly that ducks are as numerous as ever, perhaps increasing! We certainly do love to kid ourselves along!

All that is bad when considered merely as a physical factor of destruction; but it is worse when precisely these same men, as a class, carry it over in encouragement of another illegal aspect. You noted, perhaps, that in the preceding paragraph I said the law is *supposed* to restrict. It does not do so; and its failure is due as a whole to the same general type of men who own the duck clubs. Since it is illegal to market game, it obviously follows that it should be impossible to eat it unless one has shot it, or has received it as a present from one who has shot it. As a matter of fact, anyone in the know can have a wild duck served him any time he wants it, and often at the significantly low price of a dollar a duck. Quail must be spoken for ahead; they are scarcer and harder to get.

Who buys these birds? Obviously not the "poor man" in defense of whose "rights to the

game of our great commonwealth" the politicians were so vociferous in their opposition to the market hunting bill. The "poor man" is not dining at expensive hotels and restaurants, nor paying for bootleg dainties not of a liquid nature. The fellow who serves a game course to his friends is the very sportsman who is most eagerly afield during the open season. I know, for I have been there. And as those who blithely indulge in this particular illegality are good friends of mine; and as I know them to be fine chaps, honorable, good fellows, the salt of the earth, I can only marvel at the complete success with which they are kidding themselves along.

The exceeding of limits by one means or another accounts, of course, for a certain proportion of uncalculated diminution; but it is the smaller proportion. By far the larger is this organized market hunting. The poachers have it down to a fine point. They procure their ducks by a system known as "dragging." It is very simple. They sneak at night to an unprotected pond, on which the birds are sleeping close packed. There they turn loose automatic shot-

guns whose magazines have been extended by tubes to hold a dozen shells apiece. Hastily gathering the spoils, they load them in light trucks disguised as innocent delivery wagons of one sort or another, and are off down the highway to the city to fulfill their contracts. From one such raid they will net several hundred wild fowl at a time; more, perhaps, than the pond owners would kill legitimately in the season.

Why is it not stopped? Oh, there are a great number of surface reasons. The country is very big and the roads are good; even the most vigilant patrol by the inadequate force available and the quickest action by club keepers can rarely hope to accomplish more than an abandonment of the slain. There may very possibly be instances of collusion. Occasionally an arrest is made: but what is a fine of fifty or a hundred dollars? An active man can make that up, and more, in another night's "drag." One judge, for a time, at least, imposed a jail sentence of one day for each bird in possession. If all judges would adopt that policy, it might give some pause to the least reckless. I do not happen ever to have heard of any of the larger hotels or

restaurants being called to account. The difficulties of legal evidence may be too great; or there may be some politics in the matter. I have no opinion to express as to that. But, as I have said, these are surface reasons. The real reason is that there is a demand; and that demand, from the very nature of the situation, is made by those people who, as a class, should be sufficiently intelligent and enlightened and interested to know better.

That is the situation as everybody knows from "common knowledge." It is understood and acknowledged in private conversation by everybody at all in the current of such affairs. Once in a while somebody expresses it in print and is at once cried down by those interested or whose pride of office is touched. The procedure is very simple—and asinine: a blanket denial, followed by a "challenge" to prove the statements. Who wants single handed to plunge into that sort of a mess? Even the conscientious game warden has difficulty in collecting legal proof, and that is his business; but you can wager he knows perfectly what is going on.

"If you are willing to make the statements,

you should be willing to back them!" howls the politician. Ordinarily that finishes it. The syllogism is so perfect. Well, I am not going to pay any attention to any such denials or accept any challenges. I am saying what I am saying as a matter of opinion based on my observation. That is the way judgments are made. The value of the judgments depends not on "legal proof" but on one's estimate of the cool-headedness and reliability of the man who judges. I am saying that I believe "common knowledge" to know what it is talking about. It is my story, and I stick to it. My purpose is to contribute my small bit toward education of thoughtlessness. My remarks are not for those who realize perfectly what they are about. They are partly a friendly plea to get over this childish kidding of ourselves along; partly to record a minor phase in the history of our times.

2

In the days of which I am at present writing there was as yet no thought of, no necessity for, such things as bag limits. The only method of conservation that might well have been inaugu-

rated would have been the elimination of the market hunter. He it was who tipped the balance of numbers over to the declining side, poised the toboggan toward the extinction that loomed with the advent of the motor car. But how could we expect anybody to have that wisdom, when we have not even to-day eliminated the market hunter? Besides, were not the quail—like Michigan pine and wild pigeons and Alaska salmon—"inexhaustible"? Amateur shooting for sport was a negligible factor. The market hunter was at it day in and day out. He was not interested in sport; he was in business. Game was abundant and therefore cheap, so that quantity production alone was worth while. Before the first bag limit of fifty a day was imposed, a good market hunter would bring in a hundred brace of quail or several hundred ducks. I remember one professional, who did a little "dude wrangling" on the side, guaranteeing that his client would kill fifty geese in a day's shoot or no pay. Why should any sane man want to kill fifty geese in a day? His fee was ten dollars, and such of the bag as the client did not use. The markets were full of game. Ducks, geese, quail, and pigeons

were, as a matter of fact, a part of their stock, as was mutton and beef. And, do not forget, it was as legitimate. We cannot blame the market hunter; we can only deplore our own lack of foresight. Taken as a whole these market hunters were a fine class of men. They were in no sense loafers. Market hunting itself was hard labor in long hours. Out of season you would find them filling a great variety of useful and sometimes responsible positions. I think, in the fundamentals of sportsmanship, the majority of them would grade somewhat higher than the majority of our present-day amateurs. When market hunting was finally illegalized, few of the poachers were drawn from their ranks. The game bootleggers of to-day are recruited from the half-criminal seekers of easy money, by no means unwilling to become serious criminals and "get you" if you try to interfere with them.

In the days of this great abundance the sporting shooting of quail almost necessitated a party of not less than four. More was better. We drove to the rolling sagebrush hills, and there, deploying in a skirmish line from crest to

bottom, we walked forward. As soon as we began to catch sight of the birds on the ground ahead of us we quickened our pace. We had to go faster than they could run. And how they could run! They were by preference foot racers. Unless closely pressed, only the interposition of a transverse shallow valley or *barranca* would get them into the air. Then they arose with a roar, set their wings, and sailed like so many airplanes to alight on the rounded next crest. And they lit running. By the time the hunters had toiled down into the hollow and up the other side they were a quarter of a mile away. A greenhorn at the sport could tag along thus all day, aggravatingly within sight and sound of hundreds of birds, but never within range of a flying target unless it be a chance single or so that had dropped out of the pack.

The first thing to do was to get them in the air; and as this could be done only by pressing them beyond their ground speed, we jog-trotted and stumbled in the heavy waist-high brush under the hot California sun until we were gasping for breath and streaming with perspiration. The briefest pause gave the little devils a command-

ing start. When they did rise it was always at eighty or a hundred yards, away beyond shotgun range. Nevertheless, every man came to a halt and blazed away with both barrels. A tidy and orderly Eastern sportsman would have concluded that the sun had us. It looked insane; but there was sound method in our madness. The noise of the guns and the patter of spent shot rattled them, broke up their community ideas. A certain number swerved down, to right or left out of the covey, to hide. Once a quail is separated from his fellows all idea of running leaves his head. We paid them no attention but trotted on after the main pack, which now rose again sooner and slightly nearer than before. A second out-of-range volley caused still more to seek cover. By the time we had expended a half-dozen apparently useless shells apiece we had the lot well scattered and could take breath and rest a little before retracing our steps at a more leisurely pace. We knew that each bird would now lie close, sometimes almost until trodden upon, in the exact spot where he had dropped.

Then was the time to reverse our march, re-

turning along the side hill in the same skirmish formation. The shooting, as compared to Eastern quail shooting, was rather difficult. The birds were larger and stronger, they flew faster, their start from the hard-baked earth was quicker. But what chiefly confused the unaccustomed newcomer was the fact that this was all side-hill shooting. The birds rarely flushed at one's level, but rose below or above one, and darted up or down hill at the most disconcerting angles. No matter how good a shot a man might be, it took him some time and many misses before he could become accustomed. And even when he began to hit birds, it took him some time more to acquire the knack of marking them. A quail falling on the long slant of momentum into thick sage will be most certainly lost unless the shooter notes and keeps his eye on the exact spot. And that means no approximate "there or thereabouts." These blue quail with their russet and brown breast scallops are so admirably camouflaged that occasionally one finds one's self staring directly at the bird one is seeking without at first actually seeing it.

Because of this we conducted the hunt accord-

ing to tacitly understood observances. As a general rule, barring especial conditions of open ground, we never killed a second bird until the first was picked up and in the coat. The temptation, as quail after quail buzzed up before us in our labored progress to the spot we had marked, was sometimes very great, as was the impulse to let go the second barrel on the rise. But after an experience or so of not only losing a dead bird, but also of wasting an inordinate amount of time looking for it, the most eager conformed. Another observance was that the skirmish line should remain unbroken. If one was delayed in his search for a dead bird, or by some other reason, the rest waited for him. Should he, nevertheless, fall behind, it was well understood that, no matter how many he might flush, he must not shoot until he had regained his position. This was a simple matter of safety. For the same reason each shot only at the birds he himself flushed, and never at any that broke back. If a man was too excitable to remember in all circumstances these simple rules, next time we left him at home. Some of these chaps seemed to lose all the world in a gray mist when a quail flushed. All they saw

was the bird. And we, panic-stricken, have on a number of occasions dropped flat in the sage-brush while the charge of shot whistled by.

3

I have been thus particular in describing an old-fashioned California quail shoot, not merely because of its historical and sporting interest, but to indicate why Deuce became a retired business dog in spite of swarms of game. It must become obvious that in the initial scattering of the covey a bird dog could be only a hindrance. The need is for speed, speed and even yet more speed. The hunters must run the little blue devils ragged. If they had to hold back for perfectly proper canine investigations into the abundance of scent left by the scurrying multitudes, they would never even come into sight of that pack again. It would seem that one might leave the dogs with the horses until the scattering was successfully accomplished. After that he should be useful for the close-lying birds, and especially for retrieving. I tried that. But the hot dry air combined with the strongly scented pollen of the sage

soon dulled smelling power. I have seen even so keen a sense as that of Deuce utterly at fault in locating a fallen bird I could discern within two feet of his nose. Only water, and plenty of it, could restore the faculty; and then only for five or ten minutes. There was no water.

Besides, who but the owner wants a dog along, anyway? What earthly practical good is he? Don't need him to find quail, certainly. We can pick up all we want without him: and he just delays the game. So, while we may be polite about it if we like the dog's owner well enough, and hold back to give him a chance to do his fancy funny business, we can't help being a little impatient; and the owner feels this and is uncomfortable in his turn. After all, the whole performance is a hollow imitation; an arranged pageant of the part, so to speak; a reproduction without the solid core of utility. We are not using the dog to help us get birds; we are playing a game to amuse him and ourselves. We feel the insubstantiality, whether we reason it out or not, and the dissatisfaction of the manufactured rather than the natural situation. Our whole

structure of sport has become a movie set. Furthermore, we fail to amuse either ourselves or the dog. He is harassed and baffled by the unprecedented and impossible conditions; and chagrined by his failure. We are disturbed by his dumb unhappiness.

Much better frankly to retire. To me one of the most pathetic of human traits is unwillingness to face change, stubbornness in attempting to repeat past experience or pleasure or mode of life after the natural conditions for them have altered. Better to close the phase as a perfect memory than to dilute it down and down by forced artificial imitation until nothing remains. Conrad never regains his youth in such a search; but he may recover it in bright strange days ahead.

It must be understood that I speak now of the old days; and the conditions that then existed. Some years later quail became scarcer and somewhat changed their habits. Flat lands out of the sage country—as in the lower end of the San Joaquin Valley—were made accessible, where was little or no sage; and the cover broken into patches or strips; and water in every irrigating

ditch. The bird dog there again came into his own.[1] But this was only after Deuce had met a tragic end, strangely enough within sight of this new promised land of bird dogs.

4

The great interior valleys can be terribly hot in season. In the lower end of the San Joaquin the thermometer is quite capable of stopping above a hundred, day and night, for long periods. The heat is dry, however; and those accustomed to it can go on working without harm.

We were three days out from Santa Barbara on our way to a summer in the Sierra Nevada. These days had been spent in crossing the wide tumbled system of the Coast Range. At this brown time of year the sun had reflected fiercely from some of the side hills and canyon walls; but even the comparatively small elevations of a few thousand feet had been sufficient to draw its deadlines. We did not know this. Fresh from the Coast, we thought it torrid enough. Nevertheless, the animals seemed to get on very well.

[1] I have dealt at length with this later sport in "The Ranch," which is included in a volume called *The Killer*.

This included Deuce, who, so far from showing distress or even that degree of discomfort which would keep him in the trail at the horses' heels, occupied much of the day quartering ahead in investigation.

After the high and rugged passes about Pine Mountain, and the obviously mountainous valley of the Sisquoc, one emerges into a country of roundly molded smooth brown hills. One's impression is of low foothills that must break and merge gradually into some plain beyond. Therefore it is with a distinct shock of surprise that one comes around a corner to find himself looking down some three thousand feet. The supposed foothills have turned out to be a plateau, and, once one has descended to the dim map-like level, will be looked back upon as a rampart of respectable mountain height. The plunge is most abrupt. From beneath one's feet the plain flows out like something viscid. Even its nearest topographical features are blurred into soft focus by the vapor of heat. Only a few miles out begins an amorphous brown haze, that thickens and thickens until it veils the whole world in its mystery. There is no horizon; and

the blue sky only frees itself halfway to the zenith.

It was early morning. We stopped only long enough to tighten cinches and examine packs. Out where the haze began to obscure we could make out a tiny patch of cottonwoods. This marked the cattle ranch—and water—of our next destination. From the foot of the mountains it was probably not more than ten miles. Nothing formidable about that; especially when viewed from the foreshortening of distance.

The trail we were following plunged straight off, of course. There was as yet no Forest Service. "Made" trails were unknown. The first fellow picked the best route he could and scrambled up it or slid down it. The rest followed his lead. By and by a defined and recognizable trail was worn into the landscape. If one ever came across any indication of human labor on these ways-through he could be very certain that without it the way-through simply did not exist. Nobody inexperienced would believe that a goat, let alone a horse, could make his way right side up over some of those early mountain trails. The nearest anybody ever came to improving things for the

fellow behind him was to pile one small rock atop another to "monument" the route. I shall have more to say of this when I write of Tuxana and the Horseback Days.

The point to make here is that when these first route finders wanted to go down they went down; and when they wanted to go up, up they went, to the limit of a laden horse's ability to dig in its hoofs. No easement of grades for them! The consequence was that we slid to the floor of the valley all at once, as one might say; and found ourselves inevitably committed before we realized it. Once down we certainly could not climb back again; not with pack horses; not in this heat.

We had thought the upper levels hot. We had not known anything about heat. I doubt if I could convey to you more than a feeble image as compared to the actuality. The quality of the air was that of the blast that hits one before a furnace door suddenly opened. The sun had actual physical weight, an unremitting pressure like that of a heavy hand. At five o'clock that afternoon, on the vine-shaded north veranda of the ranch house, the thermometer stood at one

hundred and twenty. What it was at midday in the sun I would not dare to guess.[1]

The distance to the ranch-house oasis had not impressed us as we had looked down upon it from above. Now it became really formidable. At pack-horse gait it would take us at least four hours to reach it. The floor of the plain immediately before us was fluffy with a fine powdery mixture, six or eight inches deep, of alkali dust. To maintain living temperature in animal tissues a tremendous compensatory evaporation must take place; an evaporation far beyond the body's storage capacity.

We had a canteen apiece; and, unless something queer happened, had nothing to do but sit our horses. At first the possibility of something queer did not even occur to us. It was very uncomfortable; that was all. Then after a while we began to get a bit anxious as to our profusely sweating horses. Would their storage capacity last out the time of demand upon it? Time has a way of expanding incredibly. Four

[1]The usual weather is, of course, nothing like this. In the eight days that followed we rode twenty miles a day without too great discomfort.

hours, viewed as a whole, at their beginning, had not seemed much. When their measurement by single slow-plodding dust-choked footsteps had been forced upon us, they swelled over the horizon of human belief. There was a magic to the succession of their minutes, even their seconds, which made each a little longer, a little heavier, than its predecessor; until the blessedness of their termination had receded beyond imagination.

Occupied with this increasingly anxious scrutiny of our horses' condition I gave too casual an attention to Deuce. He had, as I have related, ranged blithely ahead of us in the sufficiently torrid upper country. He did not now show any especial distress. To be sure, he was uncomfortable, and showed it; but so were we all uncomfortable. For a time he followed at the horses' heels. Then he would run ahead fifty yards to lie down in the scanty shade of a mesquite until we had passed. This seemed a sensible thing to do. Once I dismounted and gave him a little water from my canteen in the top of my hat: I had not much to give at a time.

Then unexpectedly he did not arise from his

shade and join us. I rode back and tried to coax him. I did not comprehend; I thought that even Deuce had reached his limit of unease and had made up his mind to stay where it was comparatively comfortable. How could his doggy mind understand that we *must* go on? His eyes apologized but he did not stir. I tried to command him. Finally I set him on his feet, proposing to lead him until his obstinacy had been overcome. Then it became evident that he could do no more in the way of travel.

It was agreed that the others were to push on to the ranch, there if possible to procure a wagon and water. I would stay with Deuce until their return. We carried him a short distance to a lone scant tree, where I made him as comfortable as possible on my coat. The pack train slowly dwindled in the distance until my eyes could follow them only by the pink-white cloud of light dust. Sparingly I doled out the water from the canteen. It would be slow and long, but in time the bronze-hot day would wane, and the wagon would come, and the water, and all would be well.

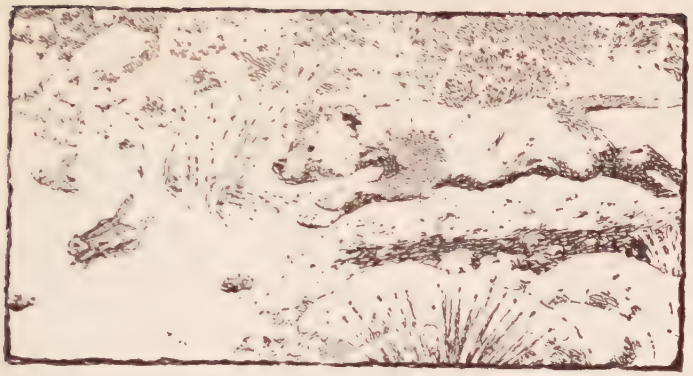
A half hour later quite peacefully Deuce died.

Thoroughbred that he was, where a lesser courage would have acknowledged a warning distress this side of the danger point, he had carried on to the end.

In that hard and iron wilderness there was nothing to be done. I left him my old hunting coat to lie upon, and my silk kerchief to cover his head; and I went away to sit by the side of the trail. After many hours the ranch wagon came.

5

Years later I was stopping at the ranch in the cool time of year. In the course of the day's hunt I made a long shot at a quail. Stooping to retrieve it from the rain-hardened ground, my toe stumbled against a bit of something protruding from the soil. I dug it out. It was Deuce's collar: the leather decayed almost to disintegration, the metal studs and the buckle and the name plate corroded but intact. I sat down under the tree, the fragment in my hand. From the tumbleweed and mesquite all about the quail were calling.



V. Tuxana: The Horseback Days

TUXANA was a cross between a brindle pit bull dog and a bull terrier. We became acquainted with her by accident. In the early days of which I speak my enthusiasms were stronger than my judgment. When I became engaged to be married my first thought was that no more delightful honeymoon could be imagined than one of my customary three or four months' horseback trips in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. That my bride to be had been brought up in the most conventional manner and had never been

camping did not enter my head as important. That the Sierras of those days had no made trails; that we would sleep on the ground without a tent; that we would see no smallest evidence of civilization for three months actually never entered my calculations. As I saw it, this would be a nice easy trip. It *was* easy, in comparison with some my exuberant youth had undertaken. That is to say, we had four pack horses for three of us; and I did not intend to go into country with which I was not familiar, so that it would never be necessary to ride more than ten or twelve hours at most; and I had persuaded my old mountain pal, Wes Thompson, to go along to help with the horses and packing and cooking and such things. The fact that Wes finally yielded to my persuasions accounts for Tuxana. Wes, I am now convinced, saw the possibilities of the situation. He went out of long friendship for me, to help me out. I do not imagine he believed the expedition would last very long; and I suspect, knowing Wes, that he secretly anticipated sardonic amusement.

One of my big concessions to making this a nice easy trip for my bride of a month was that

Wes was to take the outfit from Santa Barbara across the Coast Range and the then desert of the Valley and was to meet us back in the hills. Billy, in the newest and smartest of riding togs, and I were to go by train to Saugus, there to wait until one-thirty of the morning for another train, then to drive by stage from Visalia to Three Rivers, and somehow thereafter to get up the mountain to the old abandoned town of Mineral King. At this time of year the temperature we must expect, until we got high enough on the ranges beyond Three Rivers, would run roughly about a hundred. Saugus was a frame railway station and a water tank and nothing more. The roads over which we would be driven were unsurfaced, steep, rocky, and six inches deep in powdery dry dust; and we would crawl and lurch and bump over them for ten or twelve hours each day, enveloped in a suffocating, persistent fog. After leaving Visalia we would eat the steaming coarse food of the typical superheated, fly-infested stage station and sleep in bare pine boxes of bedrooms.

But all that I considered the easiest sort of easy traveling, fit for anybody, no matter where

they were raised, and never spared it a thought. Were we not carried where we were going? Was not our food cooked for us? And our beds made for us? All we had to do was to sit.

Of course, after we connected with Wes and the outfit at Mineral King things would be a little different; but I still firmly intended to make this a trip de luxe. Wes and I would do the cooking and wash the dishes, and I would cut the bed and thatch it soft, and so on. All Billy would have to do would be to take care of herself—including her own laundry in the streams, of course—and sit on a horse. We would even go so far as to saddle that horse for her; which, as everyone knows, is an enormous concession. Sitting a horse could not possibly tire anybody.

As I saw it then the thing was open and shut; for it was to be an easy trip, and my own love of the high aloof peaks of granite and snow, and the trickle of melted waters, and the flower-starred hanging meadows, and the startling uniform deep blue of the sky, and the singing streams, and the introspections of pine woods and the sun-hot aromas in their coolness, made me enthusiastically eager to show them to her.

That there was another side to the picture never occurred to me then, nor until long afterward, when Billy humorously confessed her early sufferings.

For a horseback trip in those days was not like the modern excursion of a few weeks over graded trails, with guides and packers and cooks and twenty or forty horses and made camps. We carried with us, on four animals, literally everything we were going to need over a period of months; clothing, personal effects, food, bedding, cooking utensils, of course, and in addition repair kits for our saddlery, horseshoes and the tools for shoeing, medicines for ourselves, medicines for our horses, even a "library" in a flour sack. The rifles in holsters under our legs, and the fishing tackle carefully packed against breakage in the bedding were more than mere implements of sport; they were a very essential aid to the commissary. Each morning before we began our journey we performed what from the slackened energy of later years looks now like a pretty good day's work in itself, but which then the vigor of youth and accustomedness brushed aside as casually and unthinkingly as one makes his

morning toilet. We rolled out in the biting cold before sun-up; and cooked a substantial meal; and washed the dishes; and rolled the beds; and packed for transportation every last thing in the world we owned in such wise that it would ride safely and would be readily accessible at need. We must then collect the horses. There were seven of them somewhere about the landscape. Of course, it was out of the question to carry feed for them. For months they must do the hardest kind of hard work sustained only by the rich natural grasses of the mountain meadows. The first requisite of a night's camp was good horse feed. All other considerations must be subordinate to that, at whatever cost to our own comfort or convenience. If necessary we must lie hard and exposed—as oftentimes we did—on granite ledge at snowline, so that the horses should be able to fill their bellies. To bring one's animals in strong from a long trip was the mark of the true mountaineer.

Ninety-nine times in a hundred it was impossible to accomplish this at the end of a picket line, for only rarely were the grasses abundant enough within the limited radius of a rope: and, besides,

in a rough country the risk of a tangle was too great. It was wiser to turn them loose, generally with the forefeet hobbled. Sometimes even hobbles were too great a hazard. We tied a bell to Dinky, a white mare of steady disposition whom the others seemed to admire. The clear steady tinkling of the bell became in time an integral part of the night silence; so that we slept deeply as long as it sounded, but were instantly broad awake when it stilled. After the packing was finished, and the kyacks set in a row behind the pack saddles, we sallied forth to drive in the horses. Ordinarily they were not far away. But sometimes a wandering fit had seized them, and we had to cast in widening circles until we cut their outgoing tracks. And then we had to trail them. We became expert at following spoor over difficult country. It is astonishing what distances even a hobbled horse can cover, once his mind becomes obsessed with the idea that he prefers to be somewhere else. He learns a hippity-hop that requires considerable sprinting to head off, even after he has been sighted. And when the imp of perversity drifts to him down the night wind he leaves good grazing to clamber for miles

up the steepest and most unattractive barrenness. Wes and I have at times come at last upon our "cavvayard" only after a heart-breaking climb of several thousand feet up into the granite saddle of a gap where grew no spear of grass, where fell no warming sun, where, in short, was no conceivable equine attraction. And I have never seen a milder or more surprised innocence than those deboshed animals then turned upon our exasperation. They generally pulled off these excursions when for some reason or other we particularly desired an early start.

Be the search long or short, once we had come up with them we caught and bridled one, unhobbled the others; and, riding bareback, drove the lot to camp. There each must be saddled carefully and packed in such wise that the hitch would weather through the longest day of the steepest, roughest trails. A last look around, and we were ready to start.

A day's ride then was no easy-chair affair. In the wild and lofty country of the high peaks a trail was simply a way-through. Often it was rough clinging work; with a lot of judgmentical management, and straying or falling pack ani-

mals, and a grand little time to be had by all. And when it was over we still had to construct a serviceable home in the wilderness, which meant a fireplace of one sort or another, and comfortable beds, and firewood and water in sufficient quantity. Our possessions must be unpacked and made available. The horses must be unpacked and unsaddled, and their equipment properly stowed; themselves cared for and hobbled and turned into the feed. We must cook a meal and then wash the dishes. After which, if we felt so inclined, we could smoke a drowsy pipe or so by the camp fire before turning in.

As may be seen, the day was both long and filled with activity. I am purposely stressing that activity for the moment; deliberately obliterating the deep-breathed glory of high emprise. I am showing now an aspect of this sort of travel that I never even considered. If I thought of it at all, it was to rejoice in its ease; for I had graduated to it from back-packing in the Far North. I was accustomed to the idea of condensing all my earthly belongings into sixty or eighty pounds, and then to carrying them, traveling on my own two feet, through an unbroken forest.

Here, in place of sixty or eighty pounds, we could average a hundred and fifty apiece; and we got it carried for us; and we were carried ourselves most of the time. In the superabundance of my youthful energy and in the sublimity of my ignorance I looked upon this sort of thing as peculiarly adapted to ladies and children. The suggestion that there was any discomfort or hardship connected with it would have aroused my derision. Hardship is such a relative term!

But Wes was older. Furthermore, he had in his time, and among many other activities, done a little dude-wrangling. They did not call it dude-wrangling then, nor was it in any way systematized; but that is what it amounted to. Also, his enthusiasms were not as vividly blinding as were mine. He was able, in some small degree, to visualize how all this was going to look to a girl who had roughed it only in the wilds of Palm Beach and the Bahamas. I think his sole speculation was as to how long it was going to last. So he asked us, when we came, to bring with us some dogs. Wes wanted company on his long journey back with the outfit after Billy and I had left. As a matter of record, Billy fooled him by

turning out to be a dead game sport. She was at times tired enough to be wobbly at the finish, and sometimes she looked at me with a strange expression of puzzlement, probably deciding whether to laugh or cry, but she grew into an increasing enjoyment and a love of the High Sierras that took us back again and again, season after season, for months at a time, our two selves alone with our animals. I did not then consider this remarkable: it was only the conduct to be expected of any rational and reasonably healthy human being. I do now consider it remarkable; and I hereby bear witness. That is by the way. The real point is that one of the two dogs requested by Wes was Tuxana.

2

I was accustomed solely to bird dogs. Nothing to me was more wholly abhorrent than the slightest suspicion of fat. I did not permit it for a moment in my own dogs: and I looked down with the intolerance of the specialist upon a man who owned a fat dog. Tuxana was a stocky, rather short-legged person, broad of head, broad of chest, round of barrel. To my eye, accustomed

to the lean, long lines of speed, she looked decidedly like a fat dog. I rather expected her to wheeze. I gazed upon her with disfavor and put her aboard the baggage car somewhat furtively, hoping that as few people as possible would connect me with the disgraceful beast. In other words, I showed myself a first-class canine snob.

We disembarked at Saugus and settled ourselves to endure the heat as best we might. The railway station was set on a flat in a semicircle of low sagebrush hills. From the hard-baked earth the sun reflected as from a sheet of iron. The air quivered with it. The breath of it was as though a furnace door had opened.

The little station was devoid of life. Whoever was in charge had retired to the coolest place he knew. A few chickens, their bills half open, gasped in the shade of an outbuilding. The very buzzards had abandoned the heavens and sat motionless atop the telegraph poles and fence posts, their wings held half spread from their bodies, like the heraldic arms of Austria. Only a few ground squirrels showed any signs of animation. Across the flat, close under the sagebrush hills, were several colonies of these little crea-

tures, sitting bolt upright at the mouths of their burrows, nibbling at the dry vegetation, occasionally scampering madly after one another like autumn leaves whirled by a sudden wind. Ground squirrels are extraordinary.

The sound of their chirking came to us faintly; too faintly at first to penetrate the somnolence into which Tuxana had promptly fallen on being reclaimed from the baggage car. But a temporary shift of the scorching breeze brought it to her ears. She lifted her head; listened for a moment; then, before I could stop her, was off at a tearing run. I whistled and shouted after her. All said and done, I was more or less responsible to Wes; and I was convinced that she would die of apoplexy. My recollection of Deuce's tragedy in the desert was still fresh in my mind. She was too intent to pay attention. Across the flat she bounded, in compact swift leaps. The squirrels of that particular colony went underground. Other squirrels of another colony sat up like picket pins, their little paws neatly folded across their chests, and chorused their opinion of dogs. She dashed after them. They dropped into their holes at the very last moment. A third lot

farther on held their sides in unholy mirth at the spectacle, and had just about time to whisk down as Tuxana overran them.

I supposed I ought to go out there and collar her before she killed herself; but I could not make up my mind to venture out in the blistering sun. Probably she would run out of breath in a moment or so—if she did not drop dead first. No fat creature that lived could keep up that gait for long, even in the most favorable circumstances of a cool winter day. So we sat tight and waited, and watched Tuxana tearing over that red-hot landscape like the liveliest rubber ball that ever bounced. She did keep up the gait. My admiration for Tuxana's sheer physical endurance rose; but my respect for her good sense fell as rapidly. The whole performance was too futile. After a time she had them all below ground. We could see her distant small square figure seated triumphantly on its haunches in an empty landscape.

Billy, somewhat limp and pale, had revived to interest.

"Good old sport!" she cheered. "She fooled us!"

"I trust the old fool is satisfied," I grumbled, "and I hope she knows enough now to come in before she gets a sunstroke."

But Tuxana had apparently no intention of coming in. And shortly the squirrels began to appear out of their holes, one by one. We could see their heads popping up for a good look. They were immensely amused; and they called back and forth to each other remarks most insulting as to fat dogs. Tuxana paid no attention. Evidently they had run her to a standstill, and they laughed to each other about it. As their razzing had no effect, one bolder than the rest made a dash from one hole to another. This maneuver failed to move her. Another tried it. It became a game. In a few moments the ground was crisscrossed by the darting figures. The runs between holes became longer and longer.

And then, without warning, there was a lightning charge, a scurry of dust, an agonized squeak —and Tuxana was trotting sedately back to us, a dead squirrel in her capacious and competent jaws. She deposited it at our feet and flopped down in the shade, her wide catfish jaws expanded in a grin from which hung inches of

dripping pink tongue. Her eyes rolled up at us companionably.

"*Ain't* we got fun!" she remarked cheerfully.

I apologized to Tuxana; completely; on all counts.

3

We returned home four months later. Billy had made good; the Sierras had made good; the horses had all made good. Tuxana was good already; but as we had not known that she proved it to us over and over again. Tuxana's earlier history had not included mountain travel, to be sure; but it had included Life. Her mistress was a Spanish girl of one of the old families who was raised on a horse. Tuxana was in the habit of following her about when she went riding. Thus Tuxana gained wide acquaintance, not only with the whole of Santa Barbara and its environs, but especially with dogs, children, men, women, cats, alleyways, turkeys, chickens, horses, burros, and smells. Of course, a great many other dogs probably come in contact with all these things; but they do not possess either Tuxana's passion for inmost essences or her social unself-consciousness. I am inclined to believe that in order to

reach the core of all contacts of this earthly life one must possess a touch of the vulgarian in his make-up. At least he must yield to no fastidious withdrawals based on purely personal tastes; nor must he regulate his associations with any ear cocked for criticism. Tuxana was a good mixer. Nothing was foreign to her interest: and she indulged every curiosity, sniffing deeply again and again, returning as often as necessary until she had satisfied herself fully as to the nature and usefulness of that particular phenomenon. Then she laid it away in that broad wise head of hers, and I doubt if she ever forgot it. You never saw Tuxana holding quiveringly aloof, like some outwardly disdainful but inwardly longing aristocrats.

Thus, after a time, she had organized her world and knew all about it and could apply its principles to anything new that happened her way. A ride with Tuxana about the streets of the town became for her more or less of a routine checking up of things. The slow gait of the horse permitted her busily to enter and pass through every dooryard, smelling to right and to left as she went, to be certain that nothing in her

cosmos had changed. Everybody seemed to know her by name.

"Hullo, Tuxana!" they greeted her. In the circumstances, naturally, she had no time for social intercourse; but she rolled her eyes up at them companionably, and wagged her tail quickly twice, and passed on, hoping they would understand that a dog's time is not always her own. This applied also to other dogs. Tuxana generally ignored them; occasionally paused for a brief interchange. But once in a great while, with no apparent reason, she would catch sight of some canine, perhaps far up the street, and would be off after him instantly, at the bounding, tearing run of her best speed. I have not the slightest idea why she would pick that particular time and dog. There must have been some past history mixed in the business, for I never saw one of these animals await Tuxana's arrival. They either knew about her from bitter experience or they were psychic: for the moment they caught sight of her, even at a distance, they fled wildly. Possibly, when quite newcomers, they had criticized her figure, or sneered at her friendly lack of exclusiveness. They were well

advised to move out. Tuxana rarely came up with them, but when she did she went about the job of trying to kill them in a most businesslike manner. Tuxana was not quarrelsome; she did not pick fights; she did not even accept the occasional bristling stiff-legged challenges of the bumptious, but brushed by them with such complete indifference to their very existence that in sheer chagrin they came off the boil. She had no use for the futile histrionics of the jousting field, the rearings and snarlings and rollings over and final supine surrenders of the routine dog fight. When she fought at all she wanted to finish the thing off. That, I suppose, was the bull in her. When she did, by sheer luck, happen to catch one of these mysterious antipathies of hers I had to dismount to the rescue, and I had to make evident my disapproval in no uncertain terms.

Tuxana was one of those dogs whom it is useless and unnecessary to punish by whipping. Merely to tell her what was wanted was sufficient. She desired with all her heart to conform to the desires and customs of her humans. Her few mistakes abashed her deeply, shamed her for hours. She knew perfectly that we considered

dog fights highly undesirable—and agreed with us—and was heartily apologetic when some stray young upstart's impudence betrayed her into forgetfulness and combat. But this mysterious antipathy to certain individuals she considered, and always continued to consider, as her own personal matter. She accepted my reproofs; but she was obviously, oh, very obviously, not sorry. My position as her god entitled me to my say in the matter; but in the upward sardonic roll of her eye was a wise, remote superiority of understanding that made me feel like a prattling and unreasonable child.

This methodical and docketing habit of mind accounted, I am sure, for Tuxana's immediate conformity to the wilderness. She knew already about following horses, and from that simple basis, in an incredibly brief period of time, she fitted herself to the new life. Ranging ahead and to right and left of the trail she examined the Sierra Nevadas as she had examined the back yards and garbage cans of her little town; and she determined as far as possible the nature, olfactory and otherwise, of what she encountered, and came to her own conclusions as to what she

could do about it, if anything. She never lost us, and had to be hunted for, like the other dog. She solved the mystery of being carried down swift currents and would enter the water far enough upstream. She became expert at picking the soft, warm places to sleep. She observed our troubles with the horses and of her own accord appointed herself a very efficient committee of one to round them up and keep the pack animals in the trail. With very few hints from me she discovered the difference between deer and ground squirrels; that, desirable as they were, it was worse than useless to chase the former, because they never would go down holes. It was wholly her own idea to sneak quietly at my heels, quivering with eagerness at sight of game, but entirely restrained, until the crack of the rifle. Then she was off like an arrow. If the deer was dead I would find her sitting at its head, her face open in a wide congratulatory grin. If the deer was merely wounded she was of invaluable assistance; for she would bring him down with the deadly bulldog spring at the throat. Once she missed her hold, but at a second trial caught the deer by the tail. The last I saw of Tuxana she

was sailing through the air as the deer bounded over the fallen timber. I overtook the circus a quarter of a mile beyond. Attempting to cross a swift stream, the deer had fallen. He was dead when I arrived: but Tuxana, half drowned, the water boiling about and over her, was still clinging hard to that tail!

This incident must have been a high light in Tuxana's experience, for it combined two of the sports she loved best—hunting and hanging onto things. She especially liked gunny sacks. Once her teeth were clamped she would cling to a gunny sack while you swung her round and round three or four feet off the ground. Her fore legs were spread wide in readiness for a forced landing, and her little eyes fairly snapped with enjoyment.

This patient, considered synthesis of careful observation with new action looks suspiciously like thinking, as defined by many psychologists I have read. The same psychologists inform me that animals do not think. Therefore, if we are to be logical, it must follow that none of these things happened as I have described them. That is the easiest and most comfortable way out, and

does not involve the revision of any of our theories, and is gratifying to our own sense of uniqueness and superiority. It would seem that I am placed in a position where I must choose between those particular psychologists and Tuxana. All right: I take Tuxana.

As a matter of fact, our efforts to prove we think and animals do not think have always seemed to me rather complacent. Why should we object to sharing this faculty? Why should we juggle definitions with that end in view? Naturally, we think more deeply, more widely. Or perhaps we may justifiably so define the process as to exclude all animals. But in so doing we must beware. By the very arguments adduced to prove that the higher animals do not think, we shall equally prove that the majority of mankind do not think either!

And it must be remembered that such psychological arguments are predicated on the Dog, as a species; whereas it is self-evident that no creature expands consciousness more rapidly than does a dog under the influence of human companionship. One that fully shares his master's life soon becomes a person, an individual

that cannot be lumped in generalizations. There is as much difference between such a companion and a kennel dog as between an executive and a manual laborer.

Some years later my young brother was on a trip with us and was very much excited over shooting his first deer. He saved the skin and head and horns, of course, as trophies; and also cut off the legs and hoofs with the purpose of making paper knives and thermometers and such knick-knacks to commemorate the tremendous occasion. All day he carried them in his saddle-bags, not trusting them to the general pack. All evening he scraped and fussed with them, or laid them before him on the ground in boy-like worship. One morning he placed them in a row atop a log while he saddled his horse. When he looked for them they were gone!

Catastrophe! Wailing and tearing of hair! What had happened was perfectly evident. Tuxana was a frugal soul. Any bones or other solid food beyond her immediate capacity she always took off somewhere in the brush and buried. It was borne in on her, after many experiences, that we were almost certain to move on; but we

might come back, in which case her hoards would come in handy, so she persisted in the custom. At any rate, the impudent uncatchable tree squirrels would not get them! Undoubtedly, in her habitual careful nosing around, she had come across the deer legs, had looked upon them as so many perfectly good bones, and had laid them away against a doubtful but possible future.

There seemed nothing to be done. Nobody could even remotely guess where in the whole wide wilderness they might have been taken. Nevertheless, my brother grieved mightily, and complained loudly to us all, including Tuxana, and searched vainly, and proceeded with his packing a very disconsolate youth. Tuxana, who had, as usual, been awaiting our preparations seated at a point of vantage, arose and disappeared. In a moment or so she returned bearing a deer leg, which she laid at my brother's feet. After another absence she produced a second; and then the third and fourth. In some manner she had realized that she had made a mistake in property rights and proceeded as an honorable dog to make restitution. This happened, as all

of us will bear witness. If the performance was a reflex from the spinal cord, it was a complicated one. To my untrained mind it is simpler to suppose she reasoned about it.

In my opinion she reasoned concerning all circumstances that she examined so carefully. Certainly she was a creature of very definite policies. Though she enjoyed hunting, she like Deuce looked with a cold disgust upon fishing. She would rather go fishing than stay home, but she took no interest in the sport itself. Nevertheless, she seemed almost from the very first to understand about back casts—though she was never in danger from one—and took pains to sit well inside the fringe of brush, looking very bored. I must add she liked trout, either cooked or raw, as food: indeed, she was rather greedy of them. Simply, she considered fishing piffling as a sport, however useful to the commissary. At first she was much excited over the pine and Douglas squirrels; but, discovering almost immediately that they went up trees and not down holes, she ceased to worry about them, as did the other dogs. In camp Tuxana never had to be taught not to touch the food.

You see, we were distinctly ground dwellers. We had no chairs, no tables, no cots. Everything we did was done next the ground. Everything we owned lay on the earth. The untaught or immoral dog found the most tempting things handy to the nose. Our first concern was to open his eyes to the distinguishing of good and evil. Our second was to prove to him that choosing the evil was most uncomfortable. We did these things by means of a sling shot.

The sling shot is too much neglected as an aid in the training and handling of animals. It should be a stout one, made of the fork of a branch, and strong rubber bands, and a piece of an old glove. As discipline, not mayhem is desired, the ammunition should be eight or ten pellets of number-six shot. They sting, but do not injure, as might a single missile. And, besides, unless you are an expert, it is easier to make a hit with them.

Consider the situation. It is late afternoon. The horses have been unpacked and hobbled, and have had a satisfying roll in the dust, and are now cropping the lush meadow grasses in the middle distance. The kyacks have all been un-

packed. The balsam beds have been cut and laid, and the tarpaulins and blankets spread over them. Somebody has made a fireplace and the fire. Somebody has brought water. It is still too early for the evening meal, but the cook for the day has had a brainstorm. The result, in the shape of a cake baked in the reflector oven, is cooling atop a kyack. Having accomplished this highly gratifying readiness, there is an interim. Everybody sprawls out for a short snooze.

The untrained puppy—or the immoral dog—wanders into this scene of peace. His nose instantly indicates to him the cooling cake atop the kyack. A glance about assures him that the field is clear. He advances upon the cake.

The standardized procedure is, first, yell at the dog; then get hold of him; then punish him. The yell saves the cake; to that extent the process is effective. But there is often too much hang fire as to the rest. The wise dog—whether a puppy or immoral—is not easy to get hold of after such a yell. Often he is captured so long after the contemplated crime that you are a bit uneasy as to whether he is making the proper connections in his own mind. And even if the

sequence clicks with admirable promptitude, he merely considers himself as out of luck on this particular occasion and looks for better days with nobody about. Thus it is still unsafe to leave food within his reach.

But suppose that just as he is licking his chops before that adorable cake he is stung to yelping by a half-dozen number sixes. Even the stupidest puppy, or the most abandoned character, soon acquires the profoundest respect for his god's powers of omniscience and omnipresence. His last defense, his last reliance, is gone. The fleetness of his legs no longer avails.

The conviction that man can punish from a distance is most persuasive. The man who rides behind the pack animals will also find the slingshot useful. His job is to close up the rear; to keep the horses from breaking away to right or left; to discountenance a tendency to snatch mouthfuls along the way to the confusion of orderly progress. Ordinarily the train keeps its formation fairly well; but occasional perverse streaks make of his position no sinecure. Sometimes he is forced to do quite a bit of hard, dangerous, rough riding in order to round up some

prankish animal out for a good time. The beast will dodge and double until he is within punishing distance of the quirt; then will subside meekly. In the meantime perhaps the rest of the outfit has strayed and must be gathered in.

But the slingshot extends the quirt arm. The first symptoms of insubordination can be quelled, far up the line, by the sting of the bird shot. The horses soon learn that they cannot get away with anything, no matter how distant they may be. Shortly it is not necessary to bother about the bird shot: it is sufficient merely to snap the heavy rubber bands. At the mere sound every horse straightens out virtuously into his proper place.

We never had to bother about the slingshot with Tuxana. It was sufficient to point out to her that the usual convention that food on the ground belongs to dogs and food on tables belongs to humans had, owing to the lack of tables, been abrogated. She saw the point, and thereafter never once offered to touch anything not formally presented to her.

This was the more remarkable in that Tuxana, like many of our more dynamic public characters,

was a hearty trencherdog. She believed in keeping up her strength, and she hated to see anything wasted. I have seen her gulp down a gopher whole, like a capsule, hair, bones, and all, rather than leave it when we inconsiderately chose the moment of capture for a gallop. In civilization she had for investigating garbage cans a penchant that neither protest nor gastronomic disturbance could break. Once, in the thoughtlessness of youth, we foolishly tried to fill her up on small trout. She swallowed eighteen raw and six cooked, and looked like a balloon, and was most uncomfortable; but the distress did not spoil her subsequent appetite for trout. Nor had she any food complexes, as have some daintier and more aristocratic hand-raised dogs. Lua Pinkerton, for instance, is in most respects a rollicking and competent sea dog, fully able to take care of himself afloat, though not so sophisticated ashore. The vicissitudes of maritime life persuaded him somehow against bones or unbroken dog biscuits or cooked meat. Otherwise he is perfectly sane. Tuxana had no such inhibitions. She was expert at cracking walnuts and neatly extracting the kernels. She would pluck

oranges from the tree and peel and down them. I think Tuxana would eat anything you could throw down a hole.

She was very methodical when it came to formal meals, however; painstakingly licking and licking again until the plate was not only cleared, but polished to high brilliancy. This might have been confusing at times; and we might well have included one of Tuxana's plates with the clean ones were it not for the fact that at the very last she always planted one paw firmly in the middle to hold it down for the finishing touch. This habit of signing her work with paw print once saved a cook from belief in magic.

This cook had spread in a bright tin plate some dough, which she set aside to rise. Unthinkingly she placed it at dog level, instead of on a table or shelf. Tuxana ate that dough and then proceeded in her usual fashion to clean and brighten the plate. When at the proper time the cook came for the risen bread, there sat the plate, empty, washed, polished, apparently just out of the pantry. Of dough, or reminiscence of dough, there was no trace. We saved hysterics by pointing out the very dim pad mark, visible

only at a slant, the *Tuxana fecit* of the conscientious job. Incidentally, the bread raised in Tuxana's interior, to her great discomfort and our alarm.

I think she might be described best as the Great Commoner. Certainly, admire her as we may, we cannot claim for her any trace of the beautiful aristocratic fineness that informed Deuce, for example. But her complete indifference to the finer squeamishness of the fastidious was ascribable not so much to coarseness of nature as to a huge zest for life. She brushed aside convention as a clogging cobweb across the face of reality. I am certain she addressed her feminine friends as "dearie." I am certain she wore all her diamonds to breakfast. The dainty-minded æsthetic undoubtedly shuddered over her direct plunges at naked life as the gaucheries of a vulgarian. But to the world at large she was one of those grand old dowagers so thoroughly and big-heartedly and wisely themselves on all occasion and in all company that they end by establishing their own world of engaging sincerity, like the immortal Ma Pettingill of Red Gap. We all know them: and if we fail to enjoy and

appreciate and love them, then woe to our straitjacketed souls!

Tuxana's enormous respect for food once worked to the embarrassment of Billy. The latter had speedily developed into an enthusiastic fisherwoman and an excellent mountaineer. She was learning rapidly to cook over an open fire, so rapidly that she had arrived at the point where one ceases to thrill over the manufacture of the customary straightforward dishes and begins to experiment. One day she seized the opportunity of our absence from camp to try out a gingerbread. It was not a success, so she took her secret, and the singularly sticky and cohesive result, out into the brush and buried it. We returned, with Tuxana, and had supper and settled ourselves about the camp fire. We exchanged news of the field for that of the camp. Billy told us a number of small happenings, but she did not mention gingerbread. Tuxana made a round of olfactory investigation of what had occurred during her absence. She came across the trail of her mistress and followed it. Two minutes later she emerged from the brush carefully bearing something which she laid at Billy's feet.

"Here's something belonging to you," said she.

It was the gingerbread.

4

So when at last we returned to Santa Barbara, we had come to look upon Tuxana as one of us. We negotiated with the Spanish girl from whom Wes had borrowed her, and finally obtained title to her for the sum of fifteen dollars. Carefully concealing the amount of the preposterous price from Tuxana, we explained to her the change of ownership. She examined our premises; accepted them; settled down as one of the family. Nor did she ever attempt to go back to her old home, except as a visitor.

She called there every two or three weeks, and in no mere leave-your-card perfunctory manner. She generally spent the afternoon and perhaps the evening. But she never failed to return to us by bedtime; in token of fealty, I am sure. Tuxana made shorter visits on certain other of her old friends. She could not stay long, for by this time Tuxana had become a very busy person. Every family dog worth his salt evolves for himself

certain definite duties, which he fulfills conscientiously. He takes care of the children; or gets the paper; or discourages trespassing dogs or cats; or superintends the lawn mower; or even, in lack of anything else, expends an excessive amount of energy in seeing that the south wall is kept free of lizards. The nature of the thing itself is unimportant: it is not a matter of intrinsic value, but a spiritual symbol. Almost anything will suffice as a vehicle of conscientious loyalty. Of course the dog does not realize this. He is firmly convinced that the whole family will disintegrate if he fails in punctilio.

Naturally Tuxana soon discerned that she had many duties in her new home. I will not attempt to enumerate them: but some of them had to do with a careful, detailed daily round of the premises; examination and admonition of the horses in the corrals; long instruction of the younger dogs in all branches of a liberal education, such as squirrel digging, tramp terrifying, cat discouraging, finding one's way home, and the various holds and parries of combat. Tuxana was especially skillful on the tournament field and knew an endless series of feints, grips, blocks, and

stratagems. She demonstrated them by the hour, with most blood-curdling snarls and growls. One would think from the sounds that a horrible dog fight was going on, for she threw real conviction into these war cries. I suppose they were really an integral part of the tactics, intended to lower the enemy's morale by terror, like the prize fighter's ferocious scowl.

The actual scrimmages were with twelve-ounce gloves, with buttoned foils. Tuxana's great jaws never clamped down even hard enough to raise a ki-yi from the tenderest puppy. Like lightning she made her hold; held it for a second; released it. There seemed to be some convention of acknowledgment, like the *touché* of the fencer, so that once a punishing or disabling hold was admittedly assured, that point was gained and scored. At intervals Tuxana would relinquish the offensive and deliberately roll over to submit herself to her pupil's attack, contenting herself with parrying his efforts to get hold of her. It was beautiful quick sparring, graceful; a delight to watch, with a remarkably varied tactics and a definite technique. Tuxana shook herself, made one admonitory remark to the exuberant youth

eager to continue: the lesson was definitely over. But though mistress and an adept teacher of all these trick plays, when it came to serious combat Tuxana played straight football. Right for the enemy's throat; and right at it again until her jaws clamped home.

Nevertheless, in spite of her many duties, Tuxana found time occasionally for distant mysterious affairs of her own. We would encounter her far from home, trotting along in the most businesslike fashion. She would acknowledge us by a roll of the eyes and a wave of the tail, but would neither pause nor turn to accompany us. Nor would we, respecting Tuxana's day out, intrude ourselves into her preoccupation.

VI. Tuxana: The Horseback Age

In the days of the old West one rode a horse primarily to get to places. Riding merely to be on a horse was almost unknown. We rode for pleasure at times; but much of that pleasure was contributed by the mountain trails, the wave-swept beaches or the wide deserts. Not one of us could have had an atom of fun riding and reriding park bridle paths. Since little by little the old conditions have changed to cut-and-dried repetition I no longer ride; nor am I tempted to join

my neighbors in the purchase of animals merely for the sake of spending time atop them. For this reason I have never considered myself a horseman; though I suppose I have ridden as many thousands of miles on as many kinds of horses as the next man.

But in the days of my childhood a horse, or several of them, was as much a part of one's equipment as one's hat. Every house had its horse block and its hitching posts, or its hitching rail, at which dozed saddled horses, one for each member of the family, old or young. If one wanted to go shopping, or to go calling, or to see a friend, or to perform any other errand, he climbed into the saddle as a matter of course, even if his distance was only a block from home. People went to formal luncheons horseback, and riding clothes were perfectly proper wear for such occasions. An adequate wardrobe for all purposes was riding togs and evening clothes. Wherever one went he found a hitching post; or perhaps he merely "tied his horse to the ground" by throwing the reins over its head and letting them hang. Horses were trained to stand thus until further orders, and would do so; but the custom of leaving them so

in the residence districts was frowned upon. It was a good deal like parking on the wrong side or in front of a hydrant.

Some people maintained their own stables and corrals, but most boarded their animals at one of the two or three huge livery stables near the center part of town. It used to cost ten dollars a month. This included feeding, grooming, saddling, and delivering twice each day. About nine o'clock, and again about two, José, or Juan, or Benito, or whoever, could be seen loping easily, sidewise in his saddle, his right hand full of lead ropes to the cluster of his charges, with possibly a "trusty" or so following free. When we had finished with a horse we used for a long time to tie the reins tight to the pommel so that he could not get his head down to graze, to throw the stirrups across the saddle, and then to turn the beast loose with a parting slap on the flank. He would trot to his stable. At certain times of day certain streets seemed to be full of these riderless horses. I never heard of them running over anybody, or causing any accidents, but eventually, of course, an ordinance had to be passed against so naïve a practice.

2

Everybody of whatever age rode, whether he had ever done so before or not. The livery stables were supplied for hire with well known equine characters, nicely graded in gentleness, life, and ambition. If the winter visitor was wholly new to the saddle he was given Old Jim, a philosophic individual who combined a naturally kindly disposition with a determination to go through life with as little exertion as possible. He allowed his client of the moment about three gentle ambles per afternoon of perhaps a hundred yards each. The rest of the time he shuffled placidly along at a walk which no urging would hasten. He acknowledged kicks in the ribs by a wriggle of one ear and a single flirt of the tail; but he selected his own times for the three gallops, and he took no encores. Riding Old Jim was equivalent to shooting 125 at golf. However, Old Jim was benevolent and conscientious, as well as autonomous. He gave plenty of warning when he was about to bestow his favor; first hunching his shoulders; then quickening his walk until it became a trot; finally, in due order, breaking into

his rocking-chair lope. And he slowed again to the walk in proper reverse order. Old Jim knew that sudden stops or sudden changes of direction were often disconcerting to the tyro. He was one of the selective gear type: one could not skip from low to high, but must proceed orderly through the sequence. If his rider did fall off, in spite of all his precautions, Old Jim did not abandon him but waited for him to arise from the dust, gazing tactfully with absent eyes far into indeterminate distance. He had plenty of opportunity to exercise this discretion. It was said that no man was a good rider until he had been thrown ten times.

One graduated from Old Jim up through a long series of other known characters, graded according to one's proficiency. The livery men were as expert as so many shoe clerks in fitting the customers, and seemed to be able to tell in five seconds' conversation just about what a newcomer could handle. And they had good horses too: even the expert who could break 80 could be suited.

For the initiation of the very small children there was Old Man Pitcher. Old Man Pitcher was

an exiled down-East Yankee. He owned six disgracefully fat sheep done up in horsehide, guaranteed perfectly safe. He conducted the flock each with a wobbly child atop on decorous and orderly and rigidly disciplined excursions. From a cord about his neck dangled a dog whistle by means of which he gave the signal when to gallop; and especially when to stop galloping. It was believed by the most of us that no animal belonging to Old Man Pitcher had ever sweat a hair. Naturally, we harum-scarum youngsters looked with abysmal contempt on those under his tutelage. We loved to dash superbly through his convoy, at full speed, wickedly deaf to the frantic blasts of the whistle. As a sport it was on a par with throwing rocks at the grocery wagon. Our scorn had one effect: it stimulated those miserable youngsters to heroic efforts. The sooner they learned to ride, the sooner they might hope to be graduated to real unchaperoned horses of their own. Once they had done so we accepted them, and refrained from mention of their shameful pasts. And, naturally, they became the worst of the lot. Poor old Pitcher! No wonder he was crabbed and sour and dyspeptic!

Besides those mentioned, there was still another class of specialists. These were known as ladies' horses. They might be as spirited as you please, or as gentle; but two qualities they must have: they must stand still to be mounted; and they must be trained to endure long flapping skirts. Women rode side saddle then, universally. I do not think I ever saw one astride. Even the "cow girls," who sometimes did a certain amount of cattle work on the ranches, or who successfully rode down bucking horses at the exhibitions! A few of the younger and more active were able by a marvelous and complicated display of acrobatics, and in favorable circumstances, to mount unassisted. Most had to be boosted up by aid of a hand under a foot; or stepped aboard from a high horse block, alongside which the animal must stand steady as a rock. Afoot, without either of these aids, they were just out of luck! The operation was difficult, with the shadow of possible dangerous entanglement. Once mounted, the posture was twisted and cramped. Somehow the most skillful of them made it secure: a fact that enlists my wonder and admiration. As I recall my own experiments with that ridiculous rig

I cannot take too seriously the legend that the girls of those days were wholly unathletic. They had their legends then, too; to rationalize the situation. One of them was that because of their physical conformation it was impossible for a woman to ride astride securely. It was argued that she could not "grip" properly, and must depend wholly on balance. So it came about that the Spanish trainers put in a lot of time riding about with a flapping blanket hung down one side; and a good "ladies' horse" brought a high price—as much as seventy-five or a hundred dollars.

3

Upon each detail of equipment a particularity of choice and craftsmanship was bestowed unknown to our more hurried and standardized times. The first source was a combination of the Spanish-American vaquero and the American cowboy. Nearly everybody rode a stock saddle, with high horn and cantle. This was supposed to be the only model fit for the type of riding we did; though a few "McClellans" were to be seen. The flat English saddle, with its metal stirrups hung well forward, into which the feet were

thrust home, was considered dangerous and impractical. I am inclined to agree with that opinion. Certainly even the Englishmen who came out West abandoned it after a short loyalty to their tradition.

The stock saddle, then, was the choice. But one did not merely go in and buy a saddle. He had all sorts of important details to decide upon. There were four or five shapes of trees as the very foundation of all. Would we have rounded skirts or square? One broad cinch or two narrower ones? —"center fire" or "double barrel"? Are we going to have latigo straps attaching the cinch, or strap and buckle? Are we plunging on "ox-bow" stirrups or hooded? If the latter, are we picking the box type, the bulldog, or the long, flapping tapaderos that reach almost to the ground? These are questions not lightly to be decided. There are excellent reasons to be advanced for each. And when they have been settled, there is still the matter of finish and embellishment. In those days an expert saddlemaker was also an artist. By means of a few simple tools he could enrich your saddle with flowing designs of vines and flowers and conventional figures. Some of the best of

these were very wonderful, with a genuine æsthetic sense of balance and beauty. They must not be confused with the later stamped leather. They were done freehand; and the artist scorned using any stamping tool, even for such conventional things as repeated rectangles. It was probably held to be unsporting. There are no reasons for such conventions. I remember in my early sailing days we thought any man unsporting who had an auxiliary engine, though why one should prefer to drift in a calm is obscure. The carving on your saddle depended entirely on your purse. You could get by with a simple plain border, or you could leave yourself just enough smooth leather to sit on. Some of the most elaborate of those saddles were really museum pieces.

That was as far as you went for ordinary riding. Silver ornamentation was for the moment out of favor except for parade saddles, like Dixie Thompson's. The broad horsehair cinch was as fancy as you pleased, woven in patterns of different colored hair, with a tassel at the bottom. Under the saddle were ordinary folded blankets for padding; but over them was the corona, which offered wide play to the fancy—pigskin,

embroidered broadcloth, bright Navajo blankets, woven horsehair, were a few of the possibilities.

The bridle was not just a bridle, either. You would be asked whether you would have the ordinary throat-latch type; or the split-ear type —the latter, a broad single piece without the strap under the throat, but split over one ear— or perhaps the hackamore type for young horses. It could be made of leather, or braided rawhide, or woven horsehair. Whatever its material, the juncture of the reins was continued in a long lash, called a "morale," which you swung gayly as you rode and used in lieu of riding whip. Braided rawhide of eight strands was most favored, with all sorts of fancy weaves and knots. If you went in for leather good taste permitted you to compensate by the ornamentation of silver conchas or buttons. The sides of the bit were also heavily inlaid with silver. The silver inlay was a matter of much thought. One school favored the broad side plates of the Spanish bit, carved and chased in delicate patterns. Others affected long narrow side bars, striped transversely with plain silver bands, "Las Cruces style." But in either case the lower ends were connected by loops of silver

chain; and other stronger chains ran to the ends of the reins. All of which made a most pleasing jingle. The typical Spanish bit had also a long plate, into which small rollers were set, that ran far back in the horse's mouth, along his tongue and the roof of his mouth. I do not know quite what the rollers were for, except perhaps to amuse the horse. He turned them over and over, apparently with vast relish, and also with a pleasing jingle. This bit has been called cruel. It could be used cruelly; there is no doubt of that. But skillfully employed it was marvelously effective. One rode on a loose rein. The horse was guided to right or left by a touch of the reins on his neck, or even by a slight pressure of the knee. He was stopped in his tracks by merely raising the bridle hand. The bit did not enter into the maneuver at all: it was a reminder, an emergency brake rarely brought into use. Many, less addicted to pomp and circumstance, rode on a hackamore, without any bit at all!

Add now some form of tie rope neatly slung by saddle string below the horn of the saddle, and the outfit is complete. The tie rope was or-

dinarily of horsehair, of variegated color weave, ending in a hard knob from which spread a brush-like tassel. I think I was the proudest small boy in town, for I possessed a silky-soft hair rope made of human hair!

Each and every one of these many items was a matter for prayerful consideration. The saddler's shop was, with the gunsmith's, an irresistible gathering center. We went there to gloat, and to smell the entrancing perfume of wet leather, and to strive for a manful equality in discussion of technicalities, and to worship the unattainable.

Our personal equipment was much less complicated in that it comprised fewer items; but those items were quite as important. Clothes did not matter; we wore any old clothes. If we had proper hats and proper spurs we felt we matched up with our horses. The hat must be a low-crowned Stetson with a flat stiff brim. Nothing else would do, and it must be set off by a hatband of carved leather, or bright bead work, or, later, woven horsehair. Its crown must be barely dimpled by four touches of the finger. The spurs were of iron with down-curved shanks and huge blunt

rowels. They were attached by broad leather straps and carried little clappers alongside the rowels, and loose dangling chains under the arch of the boot, so that one rode accompanied by a musical jingling, and one walked to the tune of a martial clang. Those recovered from the serious financial reverses involved in the proper equipment of the horse could rise to silver-inlaid spurs with carved leather straps.

We rode with very long stirrups directly under us, the tips of the toes barely touching the stirrups. It was all balance and grip, and was, I think, the most graceful seat imaginable, for the rider became fairly part of his horse, even at a trot, responding instantly to every movement. It was also the least tiring on a dawn-to-dark expedition over rough country.

And occasionally, without rhyme or reason, for a brief period it would become the thing to go to the other extreme. Nothing would do but the extremest simplicity. A lariat twisted in a loop about the horse's nose was our only bridle. A folded blanket bound on with a surcingle replaced the saddle; or we rode bareback. But such fashions did not last long.

4

With the addition of high-heeled boots, plain leather chaparejos, and a lariat, or rope, all the above was typical also of the range cowboy. The high-heeled boots were to prevent his feet from slipping through the wooden stirrups when roping; or to dig in with when he was snubbing afoot. The chaparejos also were strictly utilitarian and were worn only in thick cover. In this Southern country the shaggy "hair pants" were unknown simply because their water and snow-shedding properties were unnecessary. Nor did anyone I ever saw sport loud-colored shirts or wear a silk handkerchief hanging down in front like a bib, unless he happened to be tailing cattle in very thick dust. Then he might put one on that way so that it would be handy to draw over his mouth and nose if the breathing got to be too thick. Otherwise he kept it in his pocket, or knotted it tightly about his throat, where it would not blow about.

The evolution of the modern youngster whom we see on the dude ranches, at the rodeo shows, and even back-country, where a certain amount

of the old cattle work is still being done, is an interesting transition. He loves exaggerated ten-gallon hats, and shrieking plaid or striped shirts, and the gaudiest of bandanas hanging loose and floppy on his chest, and broad belts studded with silver knobs, and the shaggiest of hair pants, even when his riding is midsummer and in the open, not to speak of a possible calfskin vest for good measure. Where the original cowboy was incidentally picturesque, the modern product is picturesque a-purpose, very much a-purpose. His self-consciousness has developed to a high degree. I remember the trial of some train robbers in Arizona many years ago. One after another some of the most historically romantic of the old cowboys were called to the witness stand. To the routine question as to their occupation, all made the same reply, "Laborer." Would the latter-day splendid youth so describe himself?—or permit anybody else so to describe him? I trow not!

People knowing my long familiarity with the cow country sometimes ask me if the motion-picture cowboys are true to life. They are true to present life: as far as appearance goes. You

will see them on any ranch to-day dressed just that way. Why not? Every aspiring young rider of the remotest back blocks tries to the best of his ability to copy what he sees on the screen and at the rodeo performances. The movies took the cowboy off the range, and exaggerated him, and dressed him up, and hung a bib on him—and returned him to the range again! Probably eventually his present aspect will stand as the "typical cowboy"; for his "reality" can be proved on any latter-day ranch. Nevertheless, he is largely movie made. It is rather funny.

5

A natural concomitant to all this life we have been reliving was dogs, plenty of dogs. We rode abroad convoyed by flocks of them. They were of all sorts and mixtures, except that anything smaller than an Irish terrier was impractical. We rode anywhere up to sixty miles in a day; and, of course, any self-respecting dog ran at least twice or perhaps even three times that distance. Merely to jog along at the horses' heels or just ahead of the horses' noses was parasitic clock watching. A proper dog realized that he should

range far ahead, quartering back and forth to either side, the light out-skirmisher of advance, clearing from the path of our progress all ground squirrels, jack rabbits, cottontails, bobcats, quail, coyotes, sea gulls, surf ducks, sandpipers, cormorants, or whatever; not to speak of any hippogriffs, ziphopagii, minotaurs, or other such undesirables that just might pop back from that mysterious shadowland of before-the-fire where, as is well known, dogs triumphantly pursue them with smothered yipping and twitching legs. It is hard, hot work, requiring enthusiasm and a steadfast sense of duty; making grateful the casual mud puddle into which one may briefly and gulpingly flop; and develops tireless endurance, and self-reliance, and an uncanny sense of orientation, so that one does not get lost and have to be hunted up, and ability to get home again if one does happen to miss a turning. The modern motor dog who thinks he is exercised if taken for a brief walk, or who imagines that keeping a city lot free of cats is a life work, has little conception of his hardy predecessors. The modern puppy who needs police assistance to get home after slavishly following strange legs

around the next corner could never understand our five-months-old youngsters who found their way back alone from ten miles out in a strange country. We never worried over losing a dog. You couldn't lose a dog.

So much a part of life was this weaving tail-waving penumbra to our excursions abroad that when, as sometimes happened, I rode unaccompanied in a strange land, I found myself glancing over my shoulder, uncomfortably conscious of some lack, as one would miss the sun in the desert or the beat of an accustomed surf. And after a time I would focus to the cause of this vague uneasiness: there were no dogs.

6

On her return from the Sierras and adoption into our family, Tuxana settled quickly into her horseback duties. We rode a great deal on the beach and soon discovered that she was an extraordinary water dog. This astonished us, for bulldogs, while able to swim well enough, are seldom fond of it. But Tuxana loved it. Her favorite idea was to have you throw a stick as far as possible out into the sea. Still water did not

interest her particularly. The rush of the wash from spent waves was better. But what she really liked was a good cast well out beyond the breakers. As the great waves curled above her, she reared against them, hurling herself with all her strength. Again and again she was buried, turned over, forced back; but the moment she had come to the surface and could orient herself, she hurled herself once more into the combat. That is what it was to Tuxana: a combat. She charged each breaker as an honorable antagonist. There was something very gallant in the driving upfling of her small compact body against the austere, fateful power of the surges.

She rarely failed to win through eventually, if we would allow her time enough, to where the stick bobbed lazily outside the line of breakers. Seizing it with a quick, triumphant flirt of the head, she turned and coasted in with the swells. Against the light, through the luminous green transparency of the combers, we could see her body borne mightily aloft, her legs driving with the powerful regularity of pistons; and as the wave curled majestically to its break above her, our last glimpse was of her, unperturbed by its

imminence, undisturbed by the hurling sudden catapult speed of its acceleration. It broke in thunder and smother and swirling water and foam; and after an interval of complete disappearance, there was Tuxana in the wash, held stationary or borne astern by the backwash until at last her groping paws caught the sands and she tore herself free, her little eyes snapping with delight, the stick still clamped tightly across her jaws. Other beach dogs there were that swam into the wash after a stick thrown not too far, or leaped aside from the rush of waters, awaiting the time when they should bear it within grabbing distance; but none that so boldly and stoutheartedly challenged the full power of the sea.

The littoral at this part of the coast was shallow, so that a long pile dock was necessary to reach deep water. Sometimes when we were too busy or too lazy to play our part, Tuxana would run out to the end of the pier and leap boldly into the water, evidently for the pleasure of swimming ashore through the surf. She must have loved the mighty sustaining lift of the smooth rollers, and the wild, thundering submersion of the surf before she was spewed forth to the shore.

At low tide one could ride along the coast for upward of twenty miles; sometimes below high cliffs; sometimes picking one's way between rushes of spume about projecting points; sometimes cutting the clean, strong trade winds in glorious gallops on the hard white sands. To one side the pinnacled, eroded vari-colored mesa, or the more distant mountains; to the other, the lift and thunder of the sea, and the slow grass seaweed weaving, and sea gulls screaming, and the curious heads of seals, and the plunging fall of pelicans fishing, and the mother-of-pearl placidity of sea spaces and distant islands. Between them lay the narrow ribbon of our causeway, hard and sleek and shining.

Much of the time we loafed along at a walk, or the peculiar sliding shuffle known as the "Spanish trot." The wash of the waves darted toward us, spread, slowed, sucked back with a tiny whispering rattle; and flocks of sandpipers twinkled down after its retreating edge, and twinkled back before the next inrush, as though swept by a wind. They seemed always at the teetering edge of being overtaken by the water; but never were they caught. A hundred yards

ahead of us fat surf ducks, or cormorants, or grebes, sunning themselves on the sands, hitched and tumbled and flopped toward the sea, using both legs and wings in a grotesque effort at speed. They were ludicrously awkward and flustered until they reached the water. Once afloat, even at the shallow draft of a few inches, they commanded a deliberate calm of skill and judgment wholly admirable. The whirl and rush of breaking water neither confused nor hurried them. At the last split second of time they coolly determined whether they must execute a lightning dive or might be able to ride lightly and buoyantly over the crest just a-curl to break. Twenty seconds later they were bobbing like so many little ships in the smoother water beyond.

They furnished much amusement to the dogs, who delighted to dash after the shambling and floundering creatures. The dash was histrionic. Once one of our dogs made of it a serious effort and triumphantly seized hold of a loon before it had gained its own element. The bird turned its long neck, coolly picked out a good spot, and drove its long stiletto bill vigorously into the

dog's flank. Astonished, he dropped that diver, and tail clamped, shrieking to heaven, departed thence. The loon shook itself once and continued as before. The experience must have been vivid enough to burn itself into canine race consciousness, for always thereafter, as far as my observation goes, every dog most evidently slowed up if he miscalculated his speed and so seemed in danger of arriving before the bird reached the water. Tuxana seemed to know all about this business, and scorned it utterly, leaving to the younger and more flighty dogs such futilities.

But most of all everybody concerned loved our occasional scampering races. The horses, well trained as they were, proceeded soberly enough without the need of restraint. Only their tossing heads and a slight quivering of eagerness betrayed their desires. But let us merely raise our bridle hands, they were off like a shot. This was real business! The dogs settled down to the ecstatic job of keeping up, their bodies stretched to their greatest speed, their eyes half closed, their ears streaming. Some of the swiftest, to their evident joy, could hold us level. The rest did the best they could. We became a procession

strung out along the beach. The shore, the cliffs, the sea, became a blur of speed: the strong wind tore at us, filled our eyes with tears. The roar of the surf mingled with the rush of air in a diapason of deep sound which was a background for the crescendo of sharp hoofbeats and the staccato popping of kelp underfoot. Then gradually we pulled to a walk again and cleared our eyes. The occasion simmered down. And one at a time the dogs overtook us, and rolled their eyes up at us, and gulped in and out inches of dripping pink tongue. At the very last came Tuxana at the methodical lope she had maintained throughout the whole episode. She had not fashed herself. She knew perfectly that sooner or later we always slowed. No use getting excited: speed was not her game.

And then we turned inland through some cleft in the hills, and jogged slowly home against the sunset, while the earth turned to silhouette, and the edges of the mesa were sharply gilded against the pale clear green of the evening sky. The horses snorted softly: the dogs padded orderly, close at their heels. A pleasant time had been had by all.

7

The mountains back of the town were rugged and high, rising directly upward, sheer and precipitous. Each of the major lateral canyons had some sort of a trail by which the ridge could be climbed. They were not made trails in the modern sense, but merely ways by which horsemen had crossed the mountains from the earliest Spanish days. They were as steep as a horse could scramble; often terrifying to the tenderfoot or the Easterner ignorant of the surefootedness of Western horses; and sometimes really dangerous in combination of precipice, of scramble or slide, or rounded, creviced rock sheets. Even the ordinary safe stretches were disconcerting to one inexperienced in this sort of thing. It took considerable resolution not to lean inward away from the long sweeping plunge down into blue canyon depths; or to refrain from interfering by bit or bridle rein with the trail wisdom of one's mount. We knew all formidable tests of nerve and would watch with interest the conduct of visitors; though, I must hasten to add, we never exposed them to any real danger. One of our favorite

tricks, coming down where the trail zigzagged, was to turn our horses off the path to cut across from one lacet to another. The mountain was so steep that the beasts simply sat back and slid, without moving a hoof. It was spectacular, but that is all, for the horses were experts at the maneuver.

But we were, in general, kind to the tenderfoot, for we were always eager to enlist him in our various sports. Sometimes we were unjustly accused of taking a man out and trying to kill him when in reality we were making a sincere effort to give him a good time.

As I have said, about every major canyon had its way through the mountains. It was thus possible to climb the range up one canyon; ride along the ridge, and return down another. That made a glorious excursion. First came the orange groves of the valley; then the cool aromatic shades of the lower canyons with their perfumed bay trees, their sprawling oaks and painted sycamores, and the shout and dash of their running waters. Of a sudden, it seemed, the canyon narrowed. The trail turned sharply aside, scrambling and zigzagging free from the trees and coolness

up the flank of a "hog's back." There one found one's self in the upper world of cascara brush and mountain lilac and mesquite and manzañita and all the other chaparrals; and below was the map of the valley and the blue wrinkled floor of the sea trimmed with white; and all about us shrugged the shoulders of mountains, and below them pearl-gray depths of space, so that one looked down on buzzards soaring. Here the scale of proportion definitely altered, so that the members of the cavalcade, riding single file, were like ants on the face of the mountain, and would so continue in unimportance until again they had attained the lower levels of man's dominance. At timberline our influence on the world had ceased. We moved among mysterious august affairs which we could not understand and with which we had nothing to do. From the knife edge of the summit we looked to the north over a succession of ridges and mountains that culminated an incredible number of miles away at the height of the eye. Below us was the area of a kingdom. We knew that here and there, in nooks and corners and tiny valleys, were tucked away a few huts and ranch houses; but of their existence was

no smallest indication. Nor did the south break this splendid aloofness. The range was rather more precipitous on that side, so that the foothills seemed withdrawn almost beneath us, and the valley appeared crowded to our very feet by the lazy sea. We knew, intellectually, that the crisscross grid of the town was full of people moving about and making noises and projecting both thought and activity in the establishment of a human aura. We knew that the patchwork of the countryside was a-bawl with cattle, and blatant with sheep, and alive with the upfling of emanation from men's activities. We knew by experience that along the lazy curve of the littoral the white surf pounded and broke and roared forward and sullenly receded in an eternal restlessness. But in this upper solitude none of this knowledge held intact its conviction. We could not avoid the feeling that since our departure the whole valley had fallen under a fairy-tale magic spell. Nothing moved. Even the white line of the surf, by some curious property of distance, was without discernible motion, unchanging, like a border of cotton wool pasted on. So here were we, come as through the looking glass,

into a new world of crystalline stillness. Yet somehow it seemed, even to the least imaginative of us, that behind this poise of vastness moved majestic destinies. Only when, on the descent, we slid down the last hog's back into the canyon bed did the voice of the stream release us again into our own medium.

We thought this a pretty fine experience, and when we particularly fancied a visitor we wanted to share it with him. Unfortunately, we forgot a number of things. One of them was that in this horse game we were as hard as nails and could not remember back to any other condition. Another was that the plunging and trick scrambling up some thousands of feet; followed by jog-trotting eight or nine miles over the irregularities of the ridge top; ending with the jarring, stiff-legged slide and slither down again, required rather an especial seat and experience. Thus, unintentionally, I am afraid, we often inflicted severe and unusual punishment and caused to be created about our guests an insulation of discomfort that effectually excluded the very things we wanted them to feel.

Generally we were, toward the end of the day,

forced to dawdle and wait in order not to outdistance our visitor too impolitely. One, however, on the descent drew away from us with so astonishing a rapidity as to enlist our respect. Finally I put my horse to a rapid trot to overtake him and to enjoin a proper respect for an episode of the trail just ahead nicknamed Slippery Sal. Around a bend I heard a sudden jingle of bit chains and a querulous voice.

"Jiggle, damn you, *jiggle!*" it snarled.

I came into view just in time to see our friend release his death grip on the pommel of the saddle long enough for another exasperated snatch at the reins.

"Better slow up a little," I suggested cheerfully, putting as agreeable an aspect as I could on the situation; "the others seem to be pretty well behind."

He turned on me a glazed eye.

"Would that we all were!" he cried in heartfelt tones.

When at last we had landed him in the valley we disembarked him at the nearest of our houses and gave him a drink. He refused even to consider mounting that horse again; so we sum-

moned the gardener and delivered him at home in a wheelbarrow, riding in solemn ranks on either side, our broad hats held reverently against our left breasts, to the innocent hilarity of all passers-by. He was too sunk in lethargy to object. But we had quite honestly gone to considerable trouble to give him a good time.

8

It must not be imagined that we spent every day and all day on a horse. We had work of our own; and this permitted Tuxana to attend to her more domestic duties.

Chief among these was the policing of the immediate neighborhood. At that time we lived at the very edge of the town; and beyond us, and on three sides around us, were wide fields. In them, as in all normal fields in the California of that day, lived several colonies of ground squirrels. The state swarmed with them. They were as typical of the country as the pungent smell of sage; and when one thought of California the lively little rodent was never absent from the jumbled composite picture. He sat at the mouth of his burrow, bolt upright; he scampered madly

about in play; he perched atop fence posts; he dashed across the road in front of the horses. Now he has all but disappeared. Occasional isolated colonies on some remote and barren hillsides represent the last remnants of a mighty race. I have no quarrel with the necessity; and nothing but admiration for the efficiency of his destruction. The land he occupied was thereby rendered useless for any other purpose: and his swarming numbers made way with the crops within a considerable radius of his home. He ruined gardens and young orchards. But over and above all this he harbored and disseminated the dreaded bubonic plague. I often disagree heartily with the supposed necessity of clearing off and clearing up things alleged to interfere with man's activities; but I am afraid I cannot defend the ground squirrel. He was most typically a member of a "provisional race," free to occupy only pending better usage. But I liked him: I liked his merry abundance and his cheerful ways. Perhaps in some phase of future life I may be privileged to inhabit a planet where ground squirrels are not harmful.

Tuxana keenly enjoyed hunting these animals,

and was expert at it. But her interest and her sense of duty went farther, for, like most good technicians, she enjoyed even more communicating her technique. Therefore, in the ground-squirrel hunting expeditions that occupied nearly all the mornings when I was busy at my own work, Tuxana did very little of the actual digging and chasing, but contented herself with bossing the campaign. There is more to successful ground squirrel hunting than an Eastern dog might think. It is not sufficient merely to chase them into their holes and then to dig down to them. That cannot be done. No squirrel is foolish enough to be satisfied with one entrance only to his often spacious underground living chambers. He has at least two, and sometimes three, or as many as four. Thus when he realizes that the earnest but ill-informed dog has burrowed a little too close for comfort he simply pops out of one of his other holes and scampers across to visit a friend, or to occupy temporarily one of the numerous "spares," at the mouths of which sit small bobby owls. A rattle-brained dog of hysterical tendencies can work himself into a frenzy ending in complete exhaustion, with nothing

more to show for it than a pair of very sore front paws.

A well disciplined gang goes at it much more methodically. The first thing to do, after the initial glorious dash that flips the whole impudent squirrel colony below ground, is to diagnose the hole. One must be sure it is a genuine squirrel hole and not merely an owl hole. Is the squirrel at home? In the scurry of hasty descent the animal may have accepted some other fellow's hospitality. All this is very important, for nothing is more mortifyingly the mark of ineptitude than to rush one's decision and to dig half an hour at a blank.

The younger dogs soon learned to await Tuxana's deliberate estimate of the situation, waiting in tongue-hanging leashed eagerness while she trotted methodically here and there sniffing long and appraisingly at one burrow after the other. Finally she determined on the plan of campaign and in some manner communicated it. Instantly the youngsters sprang to the job, each to his assigned opening, digging at it as fast as paws could fly, until all that was visible of them was perpendicular wriggling rumps and showers of

earth cast rearward. From a strategic center Tuxana, seated on her haunches, cast a supervising eye on the performance. Every few moments she would dash forward, crowd aside one of the diggers, and herself plunge deep into the excavation. After a sufficiency of deep appraising sniffs she would back out and permit the youth, agonizingly on tenter hooks lest the others get too far ahead of him, to resume his delving. Inexorably the pack closed in on its subterranean victim, for Tuxana's tactics had locked every exit from escape. And sooner or later one or another backed slowly into the open, the quarry in his jaws.

The hunt brought to a successful conclusion, the gang returned home, carrying the morning's bag, Tuxana's compact, competent figure trotting soberly in the lead. The squirrels were laid out on the lawn for our praise and congratulation. Every fellow seemed to carry his own and to be extremely jealous of his right to do so. Tuxana rarely bothered about that sort of distinction. Hers was the wider satisfaction of the strategist.

This squirrel business afforded me an especially interesting example of that power of telepathy which I had often observed among other

animals. My workroom was in the second story, from the windows of which I could oversee most of the garden. Sprawled out before the front door, perhaps, one of the dogs would be enjoying the sun: on the back porch, with the house between, another hopefully awaited a handout from his friend, Sing; out at the horse corrals might be Tuxana, between whom and Bullet existed a nose-licking friendship; the rest of the family might be scattered here and there, each enjoying his own laziness. It is especially to be remembered that each was out of sight of the other. Time and again I have seen them all, *at exactly the same instant*, rise to their feet, trot down the convergence of different garden paths to the gate, and there meet for a hunting excursion in the fields. The idea appeared to occur to them simultaneously on the same thought wave, as it were. I have seen wild animals on opposite sides of a hill exhibit a similar simultaneousness. Believe it or not, explain it or not, such are the facts.

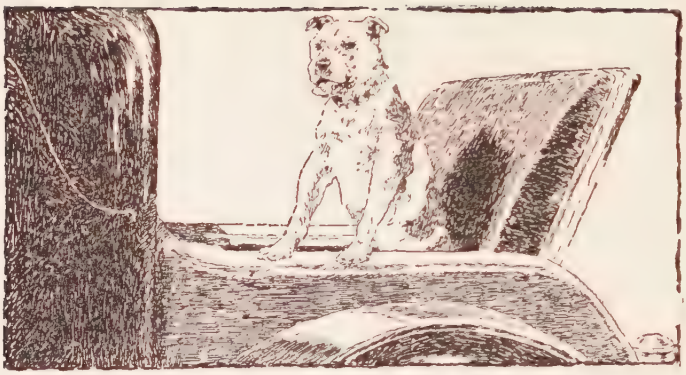
9

Tuxana was a good mother; and she had frequent occasions to demonstrate the trait. Alli-

ances of convenience and arrangement met no favor in her. Like many plain practical people, Tuxana was inwardly and secretly a romantic. The gentlemen of her choice were invariably lofty aristocrats with plumed tails. No ordinary meat-tailed suitors need apply. Her puppies were the fattest and healthiest I have ever seen; and Tuxana kept them so. She was most conscientious and thorough in their care and feeding, intermitting all of her ordinary pursuits in their favor. But at the end of five or six weeks she evidently felt that she had fulfilled her entire maternal duty. At once, and thoroughly, she abandoned them; nor did she afterward, in chance encounter, accord them a flicker of recognition. The children of Tuxana and a most beautiful collie turned out to be strong, upstanding, short-haired animals, as big as the collie, with Tuxana's square head and jaws and sturdy figure. They made wonderful ranch dogs.

Time passed. The first experiments had steadied into a growing ownership of motor cars. A few of the city streets had been paved with asphalt. Wild visionaries predicted that some day we would come to the improvement of the coun-

try roads, though their good-roads campaign had been overwhelmingly laughed down and defeated at the last election. There were a growing number of cars bumping about, but we kept our horses. A witty woman was felt to have expressed it when she stated her preference for the horse, "because," as she said, "while the automobile gets there quicker, the horse gets there oftener." Nevertheless, it was a period of transition, and the signs were plain to those who could see. But before the balance tipped toward the new mechanics Tuxana died, full of years and honor. Her last excursions abroad were at the heels of the horses, up the trails into the hills. But on the way to where the trail took off we had to draw aside a number of times to permit the dusty passing of cars. Our horses looked upon them with snorting suspicion; and we had to yell and whistle frantically at Tuxana to get her out of the road. She was not to be hurried. Her reactions were gauged by long habit to the speed of horse-drawn vehicles. She belonged to the Horseback Age; and she passed with it, before her faith in an immutable order of things was shattered.



VII. Irish: The Motor Age

IRISH was another cross between a pit bull and a bull terrier, like Tuxana. For a few years after the latter's death we had been contenting ourselves with just ordinary good dogs, only one of which, a smooth-coat Airedale named Joblots, promised anything exceptional. However, poor Joblots died of a form of distemper; and, while we were never out of dog, nothing representative stands out in my mind. It was a transition period with us in dogs, just as it was the transition period in our world, a transition from the horse

to the motor. For there was a time when affairs of transportation teetered on a balance. We did not instantly abandon our old ways for the new. For some years after we had owned and operated the first crude high automobiles we maintained our corrals and stables and still climbed into the saddle for most of even our utility excursions. Over and above the uncertainty of these early mechanisms there were several reasons for that. The wagon roads were rough, narrow, and steep. Repair facilities and supplies were few and far between. Places one could get to in a car were in the minority. Those conditions were certain to obtain as long as what cars there were adventured abroad in the hands of a very few sporting enthusiasts. Only when they began to be used by ranchmen, smaller farmers, commercial travelers—in a word, men who traveled for business, not adventure—did the rudiments of a sentiment for better roads gain recognition.

In those days there were no good roads, in the modern sense of the word. The nearest approach to anything of the sort was a very occasional short stretch of macadam or gravel turnpike, sometimes with a toll gate athwart it to identify

it as private enterprise. They were high-crowned affairs, with a ditch either side, and they made fairly smooth but narrow going for light traffic as long as they were kept up. When they did go into chuck holes, however, they were more uncompromisingly rough than the dirt roads. The best of the latter were also crowned and ditched, and once in so often were smoothed by a log drag. They too made fairly smooth going until worn into chuck holes or rained upon heavily. But by far the most mileage of all were merely ways-through, cleared of brush and trees and the worst—but by no means all—of the boulders. They were then left to become roads by use. When enough people had driven over them the wheels wore ruts, which became deeper and deeper until the "high center" between them threatened the axle. Then some hardy pioneer started another set of tracks just inside or outside the others; and they in turn were used until the ruts became too deep; and so on, until the whole surface was corrugated uncompromisingly. By that time, probably, it would rain so the log drag could be used.

Of regular road gangs there were few or none.

Most of the work was done by the near-by ranchers, who had the option of working out their road taxes. Naturally they tried to do this in the off season, when neither themselves nor their horses were needed on the ranches. Unfortunately, this was also the off season for the most effective work on roads.

The result was that the average country road, by our more enlightened modern standards in such matters, was quite a bit of frightfulness. It was deeply rutted as a matter of course, with a choice of perhaps four sets of grooves on the main roads, and a single track in the back country. These ruts were diversified by chuck holes and noble rounded rocks into which or over which one bumped. The nature of the soil half filled them with a fine dust so powdery that a ground squirrel scampering across to his hole kicked up a cloud of it so that it hung in the air for minutes; and a horseman raised a pillar of cloud by day that was visible for miles. This was not always an unmixed curse. The mountain roads were not only steep up to grades of 20 or 25 per cent, but they had been laboriously cut in the slopes by hand and powder and were made

only just wide enough for one vehicle. Turnouts were provided once in so often, to which one was supposed to draw aside and wait when he caught sight of someone approaching. The fogs of dust, suffocating as they might be, were a much appreciated signal that another was on the grade. So much a feature of the country was this light dust that alongside every front door hung a turkey-feather duster with which the caller was supposed to knock the worst of it from his shoes. The custom puzzled the newcomer from the East, who generally ascribed the feather duster to careless servants.

As soon as the rains began the whole situation changed. The chuck holes filled with water so that often long stretches of road became a broken succession of pools and lakelets, bottom unknown. The old iron-hard ruts disintegrated, smoothed into a brown paste. The stream beds filled, so that some of the customary fords must be entered with caution. As the land surfaces softened under the deluge many slides slipped down the mountain sides into the hairpin turns of the grade, and frequent washouts gouged out the whole right of way. Thus, before the end of

winter, many cross-country detours had come into use. Some of these were almost straight down into the canyon bed, and straight up the other side to regain the road. One locked the brakes and slid; and poured in the leather and scrambled.

Then, too, after the rain was over for the time being, the hot sun baked the adobe surface hard again. But the baking was too fast. In final result a crust was formed beneath which was still soft mud; or, worse, empty hollows and caverns into which one might unexpectedly break through.

2

I am not trying to draw a pathetic picture of the hardships of the early days. I am attempting merely to state the conditions in terms of modern transportation; to explain why the horse age did not more promptly yield.

Nobody considered them hardships. They were ordinary conditions of life. There was even in them a certain romance, a zest and adventure that lifted travel from too commonplace acceptance. Our experience was adequate to all the

ordinary emergencies. If things got to be altogether too thick we could always unhitch a horse and ride him out. In the wilder parts of the country many carried a saddle in the back of the vehicle for just this purpose. And a California-trained horse could go anywhere!

But a motor car, especially a motor car of those days, was different. It could take a lot of bumping at merely the expense of a springleaf or so, and it could boil its way in low up grades a modern driver would attempt only as a spectacular stunt. But it lacked traction to follow the horse up some of the impromptu detours; it could not straddle successfully too high a "high center"; it could ford only to the submergence of its carburetor. And sand stopped it short. The motorist of to-day passes unthinking over many spacious concrete viaducts, sometimes half a mile or more in length. If he looks overside at all, which is unlikely, he sees below the viaduct a wide river of sand, dry as a desert; but which in the rainy season becomes a shallow river of water. The matter has no interest for him. But it had plenty of interest for his forerunners in the game!

The horse driver plodded slowly through. The

car, if its driver was so inexperienced as to tackle it at all, made just about ten feet, and then proceeded, with buzzing rear wheels, to dig itself in. Then he was as helpless as a fly on sticky flypaper

To cross these broad rivers "flowing bottom up" one drove willingly many extra miles over country roads to a bridge, and all the same miles back again, to find himself advanced a few hundred yards on his way. Or he waited for a ranch wagon to tow him through. Or he hired a team, if one was available near enough at hand. Or, if he were a bold and optimistic soul, he tried it with his tires deflated, or with ropes wound round them, or with spur-like "mud hooks" strapped around the tires, or with his springs cinched down tight against wooden blocks, or with broad, flappy mats tied on to give breadth to his traction, on the snowshoe principle. Some drivers acquired considerable technique, learning to gauge the exact throttle opening that would just keep him moving without stalling; for the least "slip" began the digging-in process, and once begun it proceeded inexorably to its logical end of hopeless immobility. When automobiles be-

came numerous enough to demand public effort in their behalf, one of the very first improvements was the annual scattering of straw across these sand washes to afford traction. On some well traveled roads the state, or the county, maintained crews of men and horses to tow cars across free. Oh, yes, the radiators boiled like teakettles, and automobiles were festooned with clusters of canvas water bags as part of standard equipment.

That was in the dry season. As soon as the winter rains began one laid up his car as a matter of course. There was no traction in the bottom of the mud puddles; there was none on the slippery side hills; the streams ran too deep for fording; no available horse power could force the vehicle through hub-deep adobe; and even in dry weather once one broke through the thin crust into the subterranean caverns he might as well go into camp. Even to negotiate the earth streets of the residential neighborhood as far as the one glorious asphalt-paved mile of downtown was altogether too hazardous an undertaking, so that once more the near-by errands were better done a-horseback.

3

We went touring then as a matter of high adventure: never as a means of transportation. Besides the hazards of the road conditions we encountered those of inexperience. That term I intend as one of wide inclusion. We ourselves were inexperienced. Dogs, hens, ducks, turkeys, pigs, cows—all the creatures that were habituated to tolerance in rights-of-way and accustomed to cross the road at somnolent leisure whenever they felt like it—all these were still racially innocent. An appalling slaughter beneath wheels and against radiators was yet to ensue before an instinctive wisdom of caution should become part of these creatures' equipment. Ranchmen were inexperienced, and inclined to belligerency at the unwarranted intrusion of mechanism on the highways. Their horses were decidedly inexperienced, and on bare sight of a car were nearly unanimous in their decision to cramp short around, or to take to the fields or to climb a tree. One day I was jogging along horseback with a friend who was telling me of a motor trip he had taken as a guest. In the middle of his

narrative we came rather suddenly upon a pony cart with two children. At the sight my friend leaped frantically from his horse and actually rushed forward and seized the pony by the bit before he came to himself. Even a four days' tour had made reflex an automatic instant action when one met a horse. And, finally, the manufacturers of the early cars and their accessories were inexperienced. If a man claimed at his club that he had made fifty road miles without stopping for minor adjustments or repairs he was considered as somewhat too bold a liar for good taste. Every man learned by practical experience what made even the littlest of the wheels go round, and became a very competent trouble shooter and expert at roadside repairs. Tires that gave three thousand miles of service were to be bragged about: a touring day without a puncture was a proper subject for congratulation, and five or six before sundown were not unusual.

My own first car was a high, short affair of eight horse power. It possessed neither top nor windshield. Properly to drive the thing it was considered desirable to wear a leather cap, goggles, long gauntlets, and a leather coat. It carried

no spare tires or tubes, but a lavish supply of patching and lining materials. After I had learned to make the thing go, a friend and I decided to drive to Los Angeles. We had not the slightest idea how long it would take: and made no engagements; which was just as well. Our journey of twenty miles down the Carpinteria Valley to the foot of the Casitas Pass was made in two hours and with no more than the usual terrorizing of the horse-drawn traffic by way of incident. We tackled the narrow steep winding grade. A few hundred yards from the summit we stalled the engine. When we tried to crank up again we found that something had stuck. We had not the slightest idea what it was. So we walked back eight miles to a telephone and called up the one and only automobile man in Santa Barbara. He listened to our symptoms and prescribed.

"Take such and such a plug out of such and such a place and pour in about a quart of kerosene," he told us. "Then turn her over without your switch on until she loosens up. Then take out such and such a plug and drain the kerosene out, and put in some more oil."

We begged a beer bottle full of kerosene from

the owner of the telephone and walked back the eight miles up the mountain and did as we were told, and it worked. Thus we acquired knowledge of gummed clutch plates. We made the steep descent on the other side without killing ourselves or anybody else, though several people whom we passed with difficulty and snortings impressed on us their opinion that there ought to be a law passed. At the bottom of the grade we came to a ford. Into this we plunged. We were accustomed to entering fords confidently. Halfway across our engine died and we stopped short for the simple reason that our carburetor dipped below water line. We extricated ourselves by a brilliant bit of reasoning. If the engine made the car go, and the crank turned the engine over, then it followed that if we put her in low gear and turned the crank the car would move forward. One of us stripped down and entered the water. The other put her in low and steered. Laboriously and slowly, but surely, we cranked her through the stream and up the other bank. Then, taking turns, we cranked and cranked and cranked until we had worked all the water out of the cylinders and the carburetor. We were wholly innocent of

any knowledge of petcocks and plugs by which we might more quickly have drained them. For three quarters of an hour we worked at the starting handle, and at last were rewarded by sputtering explosions. Of our ingenuity in extricating ourselves single handed from the predicament we were very proud. Proceeding merrily on our way we next came to a hairpin turn whose U had been blocked by a landslide. The horse traffic had solved the difficulty by turning straight down into the canyon bed and clambering out the other side. Evidently the slide had fallen some time before, for the traffic had worn a well defined road in the U of that canyon. It was very steep, almost straight up and down. An experienced modern motorist would never have tackled it; but we were merely experienced ancient horsemen. So unhesitatingly we headed for the canyon bed. Naturally the brakes locked the wheels; and we slid down that precipice like a sled and landed at the bottom with considerable of a crash, luckily right side up and with nothing broken. Then we found, what now we would foresee, that we had not power enough to climb out. Charge as vigorously as we might, we man-

aged only a foot or so before the laboring engine went dead on us and we slid back whence we had come. Blessed is ignorance. Experience would have given it up as a bad job and settled itself to await the friendliness of some wayfarer with horses. Not we. We could go a foot or so. That was enough for us. Bob hunted up a log of wood, which he jammed back of the rear wheels. I speeded up the engine, gave her the gun for all there was in her. Then, just as the engine gave it up, Bob chucked in his log to hold her. We cranked up again and repeated the trick. Thus, literally by inches, we won our way up the canyon wall. Fundamentally, they must have made pretty sturdy mechanisms even in those days, for nothing gave way under this outrageous abuse. It was hot in that canyon, but we were having a grand adventurous time. By dark we had reached Ventura, and had put the car in the stable, and had washed pounds of dust from ourselves, and felt that we had accomplished a good day's journey. Nowadays one drives to Ventura in about an hour.

Some years later we managed Los Angeles in a single day; San Francisco in three days and a

half. Present time, conservative, is two hours and a half and nine hours, respectively.

We had our daredevils then, whom we either frowned upon or considered rather good liars. One fellow boasted that he had averaged twenty-two miles an hour up the Salinas Valley, but we doubted it; or if he had done it he was reckless. Another made Paso Robles in a day, a hundred and sixty miles, which was out of all reason. Some of the ranchmen hunted up their old forty-fives and let it be known that something was going to happen some day to these speed maniacs.

4

But gradually the automobile gained in reliability and in numbers. Farmers and ranchmen began to buy cars. The supervisors were slowly forced toward the idea of crude road improvement. They did so reluctantly, as a rule. I have always admired the ingenuity of a certain official, an enthusiast, who hammered away until he obtained grudging permission to build three miles of experimental good road according to his ideas. But nobody thought to specify consecutive miles. So one traveling up this particular

valley bowled merrily and comfortably along for a half mile, and then plunked off into a half mile of mud, chuck hole, and rut. By the time he had won to the next half mile of pavement he was in a frame of mind to appreciate it. And after he had made the alternation a half-dozen times he was an ardent convert to the good roads idea. Moderns can never appreciate how very slowly that idea percolated; nor, indeed, how vigorously it was combated. All sorts of arguments were brought against it; such as, if all the roads were smooth the resultant speed would make the country unsafe. We smile at that now; but as an argument it is no different in kind from the ones we are just ceasing to proffer against airplane travel, or from those we will at first undoubtedly oppose to each new thing in the world. Governor Gillett's proposal of a state-wide bond issue of $18,000,000 to apply to good roads was considered very daring and extravagant and record breaking; a thing either to be viewed with alarm or pointed to with pride. We all attended meetings and made speeches about it; and it was hotly contested; and went finally into effect only after a lot of

campaigning and wire pulling. That sum was supposed to build enough good roads to last for all time; and it would never be necessary to make another appropriation for the purpose. Since then California has spent several hundreds of millions on her roads!

Then came inevitably, in this sweep from era to era, a point of poise at the top of the arc. The motor car had become definitely established: the horse had not quite given way. At this psychological moment Irish joined us.

I say joined us advisedly. Every afternoon, when we returned from a horseback trip with our dogs, or from a motor trip without them, we found him sitting solemnly in the middle of our driveway. When we spoke to him he came to us, wriggling from stem to stern with ingratiation. We admired his clean-cut, powerful build, and the intelligent breadth of his head, and the perfect kindliness of his eyes. Besides, he reminded us strongly of old Tuxana. But when, shortly, we discovered that he was coming too often and hanging about too long, our consciences stirred. This was not our dog. We ceased to greet Irish: we sternly ordered him to go home; we threat-

ened him with our riding quirts. To our commands he accorded the courtesy of lowering his ears and head in an abasement that was strictly symbolic. At our threats he calmly rolled over on his back and held all four feet in the air. So, although it went against our hearts to do so, we drew back a short distance and heaved clods of earth and other missiles in his general direction. Casting a single heart-broken, reproachful look at us, Irish retired—to the middle of the street. There he sat down on his haunches; and there he stubbornly remained. Throwing clods of earth had now no effect beyond causing him slightly to shift position. That was a public street, by Gad! and he had as much right on it as we!

This performance went on for several days. Every time we left the house, or returned to it, or took a turn in the garden, or looked up from our work, there sat Irish, gravely seated upon his haunches. When now we spoke harshly to him in command to depart he no longer offered hesitations or objections, but retired at once to the street—and no farther. We were getting desperate, for our very principles of conscience were

rapidly disintegrating. We felt ourselves slipping. In the dregs of our lower natures, sternly thrust back as yet, we were distinctly conscious of a stir. If this thing kept up, sooner or later we felt we were going to pat that dog, we were going to give him a cookie or something that just happened to be in our pockets, we *might even invite him in for the evening!* Which, as every dog man knows, is the depth of depravity or ignorance. Laying aside the fact that it may occasion uneasiness, and lead to telephoning the police and inserting lost-dog advertisements in the papers, one exposes the dog to the grave psychic danger of split loyalty. That must be, I imagine, as serious a state in a dog as is dual personality in a human.

And then, to our relief, at the thousandth or so clod of earth, Irish, instead of retreating merely to the middle of the road, continued on his way and trotted off down the street. Our hard-beset consciences drew a deep breath of deliverance. We had seen our duty and we had done it!

An hour later he returned. Crosswise in his

cat-fish face he carried a huge and luscious knuckle bone. This he brought into the grounds and deposited in the open space in front of the combined stable and garage. Then he withdrew for a distance and sat down.

Hard-headed common sense is privileged to see in this performance merely a provision for an evening meal which experience had shown was not to be forthcoming from us. But when shortly one of our own dogs came upon the bone, and after an incredulous sniff or so of astonishment made off with it, Irish did not offer to object. To me it was a plain case of bribery and corruption. It worked. Our defenses tottered to the fall.

Then we had a bright idea. There was no name plate on his collar, but a numbered license tag dangled therefrom. We visited the City Hall and from the records got the name of the animal's owner. I called him up and told him the whereabouts of his dog.

"Oh," answered the man indifferently. "Hope he doesn't bother you."

"Not a bit. In fact, I think he is a grand old party. But I thought you might be worried."

Bribery and corruption.

"Keep him if you want him," said this astounding person. "I have no use for him. *I don't like dogs.*"

So we went forth joyously and hugged Irish to our bosoms and told him the glad tidings. He seemed to understand. He accepted the news soberly but with satisfaction, proceeded to examine the premises meticulously from the new point of view, followed us into the house, settled himself down with that complete competence which we shortly learned to be characteristic of him.

There is no doubt in my mind that he realized fully that his former owner "did not like dogs," that he deliberately picked out his family as well recommended doggy people.

He was with us throughout the rest of a long life. Never, as far as I know, did he revisit his former home. The only unfortunate result of the episode was a firm complex against things thrown. He had no use whatever for stick games or balls, but would sit aside in aloof dignity while other dogs joyfully chased them and brought them back. Any attempts to interest him in these things when other dogs were not

present seemed merely to offend him into a hurt withdrawal.

5

Irish, by a coincidence, joined our family at about the time we acquired Ermyntrude. We had come to the dignity of Ermyntrude through a succession of several rough-and-tumble cars in which we had learned mechanics and operating to a degree seldom possessed by the motorist of to-day. For example, we were able to drive as accurately and confidently backward as forward; and had often to do so for a mile or more when we met somebody head-on, on a steep and narrow mountain grade. Some of these roads were for long stretches not more than two feet wider than the tread, so that the mudguards and footboards appeared actually to overhang the abyss. I have known passengers, generally from the East and therefore wholly inexperienced in this sort of thing, to cower in the bottom of the tonneau until such places were passed, unable to bear the sight. But there were very few accidents: not as many, I think, as on the modern mountain roads with their broad concrete pavements and whitewashed guard rails.

Naturally enough, the conflict in interests between the motorist and the horseman went on in the mountains long after it had died in the lowlands. A frightened horse was a more serious matter on a grade than on the flat, where he had plenty of room to cut up his didoes; and besides, the plains horse had more opportunity to get acquainted with his rival on the roads. I once drove up slowly behind a ranchman jogging to town in a light rig. As soon as his horse became aware of the horrible monster in his rear he ran away. The road was straight, and the last I saw of the outfit through billows of dust, it was right side up and going strong. I drove on; and after a mile or so again caught up with them. So I yelled at the ranchman, suggesting that I'd like to get ahead of him and asking him to draw aside in the next crossroad so I could pass him safely.

"Hell, no!" he shouted back cheerfully. "Come right along behind: I ain't seen this old fool go so fast since he was a colt!"

But a mountain grade was a different and more dangerous proposition. The proper etiquette, on catching sight of a team ahead and coming

your way, was to hunt the nearest turnout, to take position on the outside, and to shut off your engine. If the horses were extra skittish you offered help in leading them past. When you came up behind someone going your way, you honked discreetly, and hung back at a safe distance until the driver ahead found what he considered a safe and strategic place to let you pass. Then you crept by as heedfully as possible in low. Fortunately this was then a large and lonesome country; traffic was comparatively light; and decent coöperation enlisted an immediate and generous good feeling in return. Then, as now, however, there was a small inconsiderate minority that bulled ahead regardless and aroused a hostility that sometimes threatened to spoil the game.

A mountaineer friend of mine was driving his wagon down a mountain when he met one of these fellows and a companion. The upshot was that when the row had cleared, my friend's wagon had been backed right off the grade and had slid down the mountain side dragging the horses after it. Fortunately, it had not upset and had been checked by a big sugar pine. The

car stopped, belatedly aghast. It was a very close call from a very bad accident; but the situation was fortunate enough, for it was evident that after the car had gone on the horses could, by a solid effort, pull the wagon back to the road. Nevertheless, the mountaineer did not suggest it. On the contrary, he urged the man's companion, almost tearfully, to come and hold his horses for him.

"Just for two minutes," he implored.

"But wouldn't it be better to drive on?" suggested the man doubtfully.

"No, no!" begged my friend. "Just hold them two minutes: that's all I ask."

"But what for?" insisted the other. "It seems to me——"

"Be a sport!" entreated the mountaineer.

"But what do you want to *do?*" persisted the motorist.

"Just give me two minutes!" supplicated the ranchman—"just long enough to knock the block off your friend!"

They drove on.

Nevertheless, the entente was growing in strength. Many a time a friendly cowboy had

uncoiled his lariat to haul on my bogged car as he would haul on a bogged steer. Once a whole flock of them tied on when, in a high altitude and of a frosty morning, the engine failed to respond to a lot of cranking. I switched on the ignition, threw her in low, and the boys struck spurs to their mounts. For perhaps twenty seconds we rolled sedately across the flat, the engine turning slowly over against the compression. Then she caught hold. At the sudden shattering roar of the explosions the spirited and unsophisticated ponies went right up in the air: and as the lariats were tied to the saddle horses, California fashion, they could not get away. It was a grand occasion. We sailed halfway across that flat, against my best braking power, before the mess could be calmed sufficiently to be cast off.

But such expedients were commonplaces to the ingenuity we developed in meeting strange crises. Something queer was always happening.

6

We named the new car Ermyntrude because Ermyntrude was the very fanciest name we knew. Nothing less would do, for she was the

ritziest, most expensive car in the market, those days. Garage men knocked their foreheads on the floor when one of her make rolled in; and hotel clerks could never understand the owner of one of them taking less than the suite de luxe, with all the trimmings. This part of it was an embarrassment to us; for neither our finances nor our desires ran to such extravagance. We never got over the idea that Ermyntrude was a little bit on the false-pretence order, and that some day we would discover some law against the likes of us driving the likes of her, and would be found out and ejected into the flivver, where we rightfully belonged. But in the meantime we collected the respectful glances of the motor-minded.

You see we had predecessors in our possession of Ermyntrude. That is why we had been able to afford her. Nowadays she would be called "conditioned," or "repossessed," or "bonded," or "broken in," or something like that. Then she was plain second-hand. But we did not force that fact upon the casual stranger. Nor did we need to, for Ermyntrude was sold to us at a ridiculous price by a wealthy and elderly couple who had owned her a year and who now wanted a

larger model of the same make. Furthermore, their care of her had been so excellent that her speedometer confessed to less than five thousand miles, and she had retained unblemished her schoolgirl complexion. So you see Ermyntrude was not so very second-hand; and we were soon able to forgive and forget this slight early indiscretion of hers and accept her whole-heartedly, as though she had all her life been one of the family. We drove her a hundred and fifty-eight thousand miles, most of them rough. We kept her so long that, to the great amusement of all who observed, we painted service chevrons on her panels, one for each year. Not once did she fail us on the road. We finally sold her to a stage company for one third of what we gave for her. She was going just as smoothly and powerfully as the day she came to us; but she was high behind and low in the hood and queer-looking, and she was unable to alter some of her old-fashioned ideas. In *her* day people did not scurry so. They got under way with a certain deliberation; they slowed down to a stop with dignity. She did not hold with this modern leaping forward at the release of the traffic signal, nor

with these abrupt halts. The manners of the new generation annoyed her, and if they performed their inelegancies too closely under her nose, she sometimes could not restrain herself from nudging them in reminder of the more leisurely manners to which she adhered. But we felt very much as though we were selling the old family horse and could not rid ourselves of the idea that we should turn her out to pasture in some oil field.

In the pride of her youth, however, she was to us a mechanical marvel. She had six cylinders, instead of the customary four, or the two with which we had started our motoring career. She had electric lights in place of the acetylene affairs that had seemed to us so wonderful. Above all, she had a self-starter. It was of the compressed-air type that would turn the engine over a half-dozen times before exhaustion. If we did not get an explosion by then, we cranked; but, then, we were accustomed to cranking and knew how to snap it scientifically over the compression, and how to hold our thumbs so that the not-infrequent back-kick would snatch the handle harmlessly out of our hands without breaking

an arm. That is almost a lost art now. A little hand pump sprayed gasoline into the cylinders to make a happy outcome more probable. We recharged the air tank by means of a compressor driven by the engine. It was well to keep track of the pressure on the gauge provided for the purpose and to kick out the pump connection before it was built too high. A friend of ours forgot to do so on his car, and the tank went off with an enormous bang that scared him almost to death in a belief that he had been bombed. Ermyntrude was furthermore supposed to be enormously easy riding because of four contraptions like thermos bottles at each of her corners, which when properly adjusted with just the right tension on just the right amount of just the right kind of oil eased the road shocks. Otherwise they clattered and jumped into a rigidly locked position from which one pried them with a small crowbar provided for the purpose. But that was our fault, not Ermyntrude's.

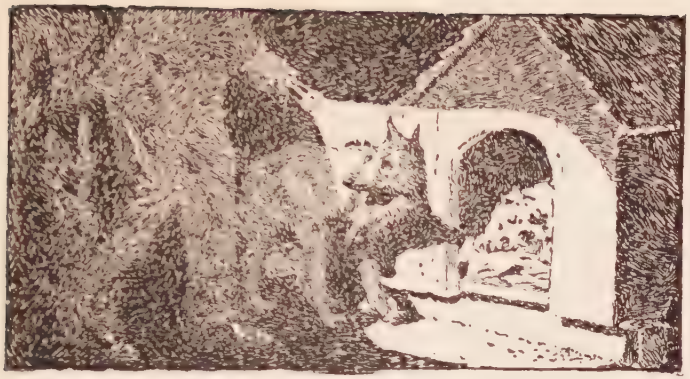
7

The acquisition of this prideful vehicle, "the last word in comfort and refinement," coin-

cided rather closely with a distressing double accident in which our two most faithful saddle horses, Bullet and Sheba, were killed. They escaped from pasture, wandered on the railroad track, and were struck by a train. Our loyalty to the traditions of the old horseback days had persisted largely because of them. Paved streets and roads were extending. There was little pleasure in clumping on their uncompromisingly hard surfaces. We were continually and anxiously drawing aside to permit the motor cars to pass; we were constantly agonizing over the hairbreadth escapes of our dogs, who did not comprehend the acceleration of pace, and who therefore wandered and weaved into and out of danger; we were always shouting at them commands which were more likely to bewilder than to help. The trails were still there; the beach was still there. But to get to them involved miles of disagreeable and chancy going. It was not the old game; and the new game did not seem to be worth while. We did not replace Bullet and Sheba. We turned the corral into a nursery for the garden: we changed the stable definitely into a garage. The Horseback Age

was past: the Motor Age was established. And Irish, examining Ermyntrude with curious and appraising nose, hopped into the tonneau seat, there to settle himself in joyous approval.

Let's go!



VIII. Irish: The Motor Age (*continued*)

THE expression "A man of the world" is likely to bring before us the image of a very well dressed and mannered individual. But that is a man external, and if considered as a criterion must exclude many with an otherwise clear claim to the title. A man of the world is one who is able gracefully and easily, without discernible effort, to move along with any life in which he finds himself. Dynamic enthusiasm for any particular phase of the moment may be lacking: but so also is active distaste. To the

positively held manners or standards or opinions of others he accords a tolerance wholly devoid of perceptible disapproval. His aloofness from them, if indeed they happen to be alien to him, seems to be of position in space rather than of opposition. Yet, paradoxically, his attitude is not of mere pliancy, but is based upon conviction of his own; which, however, he prefers to leave tacit as an influence rather than to express as standards. Accompanying such a disposition are ordinarily the qualities of good taste in dress and manners. But not always. Occasionally one may encounter a man wholly careless of externals and appearances who nevertheless possesses in a very fine degree the fundamentals. In every society he is welcomed, though he may stride hobnailed across all surface punctilios. Convention makes exception for him, and most often does not know why it does so.

In this sense I feel I may describe Irish as truly a dog of the world. His manners were good, in the sense that they were self-effacing when self-effacement was desirable. But they had few of the tabs of convention. He never injected into his morning greetings any of the wrinkled-nosed,

leaping histrionics the society-minded dog considered proper to the occasion. He did not give his paw; he did not offer any symbolic hand lickings. To all suggestions that he perform even the simplest rollings-over, or sittings-up, or showings that his paws were clean, he offered an immobile stolidity, but with a humorous twinkle of appreciation in his eye. The invariability of his attitude, the steadiness of his refusal to learn tricks, indicated a settled principle. It was evident that he saw in such frivolities an unrelatedness to the realities of life that savoured of charlatanism, an attempt to purchase notice and favor with a baser coin than he cared to dispense. Without offensively stressing the point, he preferred to fix his place in his world by solid and worthy adaptations, rather than by over-eager concessions.

True to one of the minor characteristics of the citizen of the world, Irish was expert at doing himself as well as circumstances permitted. This is a necessary trait in anyone called upon to fit into diverse societies; for if the body be straitened, how shall the spirit be free? So, wherever he found himself in our erratic journeyings, Irish

devoted the first minutes, after greetings, to canvassing the whole situation thoroughly. No curling up in the nearest corner for him. His first care when we called at a new place was to discover if the dining room had a swinging door leading to the kitchen. Irish was an expert panhandler and could wheedle to fit his name. After a light lunch of courtesy he then sought to rest as warm and as soft as circumstances afforded, the importance lying in the order named. A cushion before an open fire was ideal; a soft rug in the same position good enough. From that accommodations graded on down, to the gunny sack on the concrete floor of some hotel basement. That was all right; Irish accepted such things tranquilly and settled down without protest or without uneasiness as to our reappearance, in most forbidding and lonesome strangeness. He had full confidence that we would return in due time. We always had done so. This estimable philosophy struck with admiration those with whom, in such situations, he came into professional contact—the hotel porters or bell boys or custodians of the furnace or whatever. To these people inured to the whines,

howls and barks of the hysterical who conceived themselves abandoned to strangers, Irish's calm and friendly acceptance seemed almost supercanine; and they expressed their esteem by the tidbits of especial attention, and by an often expressed wish that they had a dog like that.

But, as I have hinted, this philosophic acceptance depended on Irish's conviction that he had attained to the best possible in the circumstances. He accepted unquestioningly our selections for him. But when—as frequently happened at small country hotels, or at a friend's house overnight, or when we camped out by the roadside—he was turned loose on his own, he looked the situation over thoroughly before coming to a decision. He was quite unobtrusive about it and never bothered anybody. So accustomed were we and our friends to his methods that we simply took him with us and paid him no further attention. When it was time to go home we whistled, and he appeared. He had a very good sense of our intentions and rarely confused a mere social call with a more extended visit.

On one occasion, however, the telepathic wires must have been down. We went to spend

the evening with friends. Irish discovered a gratifyingly mobile pantry door and disappeared in the direction of the kitchen. When the time arrived to go home he was nowhere to be found. Our first clue as to his whereabouts was the sight of the family's dog, very woebegone and shivering, out in the cold before his own kennel. The flashlight discovered Irish comfortably snoozing within. For some reason he had concluded that we were to stay for a visit; and, with his usual customary efficiency, had made the necessary appropriation for a comfortable night.

How he had so successfully ejected the family dog I do not know; but I suspect he had merely told him about it. Irish was not quarrelsome and rarely condescended to combat. There was something about his muscular square-cut stolidity, together with his aloof directness of purpose, that brought the most ebullient down to a simmer. Purposeless fighting he considered nonsensical. But when he did swing into combat he was formidable, and he gave no quarter. Most of his battles were on behalf of our other dogs, whose rashness had betrayed them. I am afraid they understood this loyalty rather too

well. One in particular, named Bunk, seemed deliberately to provoke quarrels, from which at an appropriate crisis he would withdraw, leaving Uncle Irish to mop up for him. So frequently did he work this that he ended by deluding himself into the belief that he was a mighty warrior on his own account. After Irish had died he went right on picking the quarrels and getting most soundly thrashed, to his evident bewilderment. He never did figure out why suddenly he began to lose all his battles.

Irish's bark was deep and resonant, manly, authoritative, and arresting. But for a long time we did not know that he possessed a bark at all. No more than with idle combat did he hold with trivial ululation.

2

Irish accompanied us everywhere, and was everywhere welcome, even in those houses from whose interiors the family dog was permanently exiled. From such places, naturally, we ourselves excluded him; but by some mysterious policy of his own, which did not include begging or whining insistences by the way, he sooner or

later wangled himself a welcome. Irish was no opponent of special privilege, nor bigoted protagonist of equal rights for dogs. It must have been sheer personality. Once established within, he maintained his status, not by the idiotic abasements of flattery, but by the more subtle uprolled eye of humorous appreciation, and by the rap-rap-rap against the floor of a vigorous tail in warm response to quip or jest. Irish had a grand sense of humor—or at least a keen perception of humorous intent.

This complete identification with our movings about necessarily made of Irish an automobile dog. The age had at last definitely become that of motors. Save for long journeys to foreign parts, we used them for all our wayfaring, from the trivial errand downtown to the business or pleasure trip far up beyond the Oregon line. Irish was almost as much a part of the car as the speedometer. We never bothered to whistle him up. The first explosion of the engine was signal sufficient. Then he was alongside, his haunches gathered under him in readiness for his spring to the tonneau the instant we opened its door for him.

I confess myself, after many years of attentive experience, completely nonplussed by the awareness of dogs. Whether their mysterious distant identifications are in some sense telepathic or clairvoyant, or whether some of their senses are stirred by fainter vibrations than those to which we are susceptible, I do not know. Nor do I insist upon, or even urge, any theories, and am entirely receptive to those from any school of thought. What I do insist upon is the authenticity of the fact; for that may be verified by anyone. Most of our own dogs have recognized the approach of our own car even at a half block of distance and have risen to greet it, though all day other cars had been passing by hundreds. Even from inside the house they were able to catch faint differences; so that delivery cars or the motors of friends entered the driveway without disturbing their repose by the flicker of an ear, whereas the return of one of the family found them clamoring at the door. For many years we satisfied ourselves well enough by telling each other that keenness of ear enabled them to detect differences in the motor sounds imperceptible to us. It was not much of an explanation;

but it saved thought and uneasiness of mind; and that is all most explanations are good for, anyway.

But a year ago my brother Roderick visited us for several months and struck up a warm entente with another brilliant member of our family named Lobscouse. Roderick is a musician and used often to drive to San Francisco, twenty miles, to play or talk shop, returning at all sorts of irregular hours. The latter point must be emphasized. We never knew when he was likely to get back; nor did he. We did know, however, when he was imminent; for always, some moments before he entered the front door, Lobscouse was there waiting. So far this was merely another example of what we had been talking about. But little by little Lobscouse extended his prevoyance until he was able to predict Rod's arrival by as much as four and five minutes; which meant, by ordinary highway travel rate, some two or three miles. So invariably accurate was he that we came to rely on him. Obviously he could not have heard the motor at that distance. That labor-saving theory was out as far as Lobscouse was concerned; and probably as far

as the other shorter ranged instances with the other dogs is concerned too.

No, I do not know how they do it any more than I know how they are aware when it is just ten o'clock, as they do every evening of their lives; or how they are able to nose out my spoor even though I wear brand-new shoes. They just do—that is all. I do not doubt Lobscouse would make the same reply were he asked how we humans are able to produce at will such highly desirable things as fire and light. That is a straitened spirit who cannot accept thankfully merely because he is unable to explain. Life is crabbed for such a one; for it necessarily is limited by the capacity of his intellect, which may be small.

3

Most dogs have a natural affinity for motor cars. They seem to enjoy the rushing of swiftness, perhaps the sense of superiority to pedestrians both human and canine. If they are so placed that they can thrust an overside nose into the streaming wind they are ecstatically happy; but even the doldrum of a closed limousine is acceptable though inhibitory, as proved

by the multiplicity of wistful nose prints on the glass. Rather than be left at home some dogs have even learned to balance on the running board, but that has always seemed to me a dangerous and unworthy compromise on the part of the motorist.

Irish went with us everywhere, whether the expedition was a brief one to the shops, or a camping trip that would cover three states. He could be included where any of the other dogs would be wholly impossible because he was able to fit himself to any circumstance, and because he gauged so nicely the moments of proper self-effacement. We were never untimely awakened by Irish, even when camping. He waited quiveringly patient until we opened our eyes; then leaped forward for his grand *bonjour*. We never had to worry about where he was going to sleep, or whether he was going to stray or raise a fuss, or whether he was going to beg or make a nuisance of himself in any way. An occasional polite nose nudge of suggestion was all he ever permitted himself. Nevertheless, he was distinctly not a wilderness dog, as he demonstrated by getting himself thoroughly lost the only time we tried

to take him afoot into the High Sierras. He turned up finally in Oakland, some hundreds of miles away; and we recovered him solely because the people to whom he had completely endeared himself were too honest to hold out against our advertisement. No one could ever have lost Tuxana that way.

4

But, after all, that sort of thing was not expected from him. His call to life was different. Irish filled heartily the whole community in which he lived. No one could lose him there: he knew every street and alley and side road; every canyon trail. He took with him always our other dogs, and perhaps a select friend or so from down the road. At first people used to telephone us that they had seen our dogs "away over toward Spring Valley," or "beyond the Crystal Springs road," believing in the kindness of their hearts that they were giving us a welcome clue toward finding them. Later all our friends learned that these expeditions had to do with some mysterious canine business, that they were seriously planned and undertaken, and that nobody was lost. I am

a little vague as to the primary object. An occasional brush rabbit was pounced upon suddenly and skinned neatly and devoured. There was some desultory ground-squirreling. Once in a while a jumped deer created considerable raving excitement that exhilarated and finally exhausted the dogs and did not harm the deer. Indeed, the latter always seemed more amused than otherwise, for after a dozen tremendous leaps over the brush tops he would turn to gaze back sardonically on his toiling and panting pursuers, allowing them a tantalizing nearness before again he bounded away. This sometimes kept up for hours, at the end of which the deer departed in a businesslike way up Black Mountain and the wearied dogs flopped into the nearest pool. Whenever they failed to return from one of their expeditions until after dark, and then in a dragging state of near collapse, we knew they had met with a deer. By other signs, even more unmistakable, we also knew when they had met with a skunk. Skunks were rather distressingly plentiful and apparently were an irresistible temptation. Rarely a coyote or a wildcat, or a tame cat gone wild, offered excitement.

But no one of these things, while eminently acceptable, and even provocative, was, I am convinced, the reason for these long rambles. They were emphatically not out for mere independent hunting expeditions, for they failed to confine themselves to hunting country. I believe they simply went for a walk, accepting thankfully any and all by-products of entertainment. Dogs love to go for a walk; but ordinarily, though the whole countryside is open to them, they do not care to do so unless their human gives them a lead. But Irish—and a Scotsman named Tattie Bogle—seemed to possess this added touch of initiative. Since their death our other dogs have lost the habit of leaving the place unaccompanied, though they enthusiastically endorse the slightest hint that we all go for a walk together.

Irish had also his social obligations, which took a certain amount of time. He called upon people, knocking discreetly at the door until they let him in, then settling down with so realistic an air of permanence that some almost believed he had adopted them. He affected particularly a family with two children; and another

of chair-ridden age; and we were frequently told by both that he was a welcome and warming comfort. Promptly at half-past nine he said good-night and came home.

When released from the corral by the servants, about seven in the morning, he trotted off over the hills in a most businesslike manner, returning a half hour later in time to greet the family at breakfast. His business remained a mystery; but it appeared to be invariable. He may have had a panhandling route. Irish did himself well. If so, he must have desired to share some of its benefits with his own people; for one day he appeared carrying a loaf of bread and a carton of butter, which he presented to us. One tooth puncture through a corner of the carton was the only damage. As we had no means of guessing where he had looted this provender, we accepted it with thanks.

As befitted his position of Dog Emeritus, Irish took command of the canine end of the establishment. What he said went. If a puppy—even a well grown puppy of six months or so—offered to join in on a walk, he was sternly ordered back into the garden; and he went; and he stayed

there. If two of the younger dogs started a civil war Irish thrust between them, snarling to each in such a manner that desire for battle left them. He never barked uselessly himself, and he would not tolerate it in others; which was a comfort, as the necessary training of a dog with a yapping tendency is long and laborious. He even seemed to feel some responsibility for their physical well-being. It was a common and ludicrous sight—some young blade sprawled in the sun on his back or side, his eyes closed luxuriously, while old Irish, his brow wrinkled, his soft brown eyes abrim with conscientiousness, carefully licked his ears, or nuzzled over him inch by inch in the bared-teeth process we call de-fleaing for want of a better understanding of its exact purpose.

So integral and strong a part of his make-up was this parental instinct that it once completely obfuscated a very worthy woman's common sense and her to-be-presumed realization of sex and species. She was a sewing woman, and she was plying her trade in a small room in the second story of our house. To her, and to Billy, in the process of "trying-on," entered in

greeting one after the other our canine staff. There was Tattie Bogle, a small black Scotty; and Bunk-the-dog, whom we do not embarrass by the mention of ancestors; and Chuck Wagon, an Airedale—about as diverse an outfit as one could compass without the aid of a Great Dane or a Mexican Hairless. Singly, one by one, they entered and were greeted by the sewing woman, who evidently liked dogs: "Oh, the little darling!" "Nice old fellow," "Is he a nice old fuzzy!" And at last came Irish, bringing up the rear.

"And here," cried the woman ecstatically, "here's the nice old mamma dog!"

I do not know whether Irish found the place unwarrantedly crowded; or whether he felt insulted; or whether merely he resented such blatant biological ignorance. At any rate, he retired with dignity.

He was generally provided with dignity for any social occasion. The only time I remember seeing him more than momentarily upset was when we first moved North to live. We went to walk of a morning after a frost so severe that the shallow pools in the creek beds had frozen over. Now Irish was a Southern-raised dog and had

never seen ice. So when, as he had done a thousand times before, he dashed confidently to thrust his nose for a refreshing drink, he bumped the said nose violently. Irish was outraged. The thing somehow looked personal to him. He backed away a few feet and barked at that pool; nor could he be persuaded either to cease or to come away until he had said all he wanted to say, which was plenty.

5

In the life of Irish, it seems to me, we finally emerged from the old age to the new. I do not know. Things are still changing, and changing rapidly. But the changes appear to be of surface detail rather than of genuine orientation. There is no question that major interests of the youth of to-day are so radically different from those of our own yesterday that the resultant activities, and especially the mental viewpoints, might well be those of disparate planets. Nothing is more pathetic than the dwindling assumption of the oldster that the youngster cares one whoop for the things that were almost sacredly engrossing thirty years or more ago. If the oldster has not

sufficient perception to be at least aware of the substitutions, he laments the passing of the good old days and views with alarm the frivolous emptiness of modern times. He may like better his old leisurely world of marbles and kites and swimming holes and the simple pleasures of his youth; but he must not read into their lack at the present time an emptiness, nor ascribe to them more virtue than they possessed. Our dogs of to-day rarely venture off the place. Our garden and part of the adjacent canyon constitute their abiding place. The paved highways are dangerous with swarms of cars; the built-over hills no longer attract us for long walks; we are more on the golf links where dogs are unpopular with the earnest putter. All the wide-flung influences that so highly developed the personalities of our dog stars seem to be lacking. As compared with the broad and savage wildernesses of their predecessors' experience, our present dogs would seem circumscribed in the apparently satisfactory confines of our four acres. But I am not sure. Lobscouse promises to become as individual a personality as his forerunners. He rings the electric bell when he wants service in the house;

he is a tireless and skillful player at several sorts of ball games; he has nice discriminations and barks only appropriately; he polices the grounds after some plan of his own devising, and in all ways he fits into the family life, not merely with accuracy, but with social charm. After all, in final result, it is what people *are* that counts, their psychic impact, as it were: and the road by which they have come is of only curious importance. Face to face with him we respond to what we can exchange with a man; so that, to the shame of our conventional sense, we discover ourselves glowing to the unknown and unconsidered, leaving eminence to its own importance. Somewhere I saw a fugitive verselet that expresses the essence of this situation. I wish I could give proper credit, but I do not know who wrote it.

For, oh, it is hardly or never
That things happen just as they should.
The good are so harsh to the clever,
And the clever so *rude to the good.*

All our epoch dogs have possessed that quality of pleasant personality which makes upon fellowship an appeal that cannot be denied. They were

popular on sight. They were welcome everywhere, even in the houses of those who ordinarily did not care for dogs. They were remembered, and inquired for as one inquires for a dear friend. This was true of Deuce, with his background of highly specialized hunting in the wilderness. It was true of Tuxana, behind whom soared the High Sierras and the wide fling of thousands of horseback miles. It was true of Irish with his wisdom distilled from a varied life of travel. But it is equally true of Lobscouse, whose farthest excursion from home has been less than twelve miles. The quality is there; and those who greet it do not know and do not care what experience lies back. For it is blessed of dogs that they cannot depend on the glamour of autobiography, but stand or fall by present charm.

But I do not believe this indubitable situation can legitimately be used as an argument for inner graces and against the influence of environment. All these people started life as puppies. They became, in their degree of consciousness, very great persons; but I do not think they would have done so if they had been confined to the cubicle dog runs of show-dog kennels, ac-

corded the formal exercise and handling of training—and nothing else. They might have been very worthy specimens of their kind, but that is all. Natural genius must have its fostering climate for development. If a moral is to be drawn at all it must be to the effect that details of environment do not much matter; that the essential ingredients of growth nowhere lack to a genuine freedom of choice and of association, even within narrow bounds. If one may love heartily and be in turn beloved, he will find in his surroundings, whatever they are, all that he needs. Otherwise he is likely to remain just plain dog.

THE END